

**NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

*May 17, 2026*  
*Seventh Sunday of Easter*



**WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP! You are special, because God brought you here today. Together we celebrate and rejoice in God's blessings in our lives!**

## GATHER JOYFULLY

### THE PRELUDE

#### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 66:8-10, 32-35; I Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

### BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

GATHERING SONG 248 *Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!*

Hymn of Joy

**Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!  
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder; all creation is amazed.  
In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.  
Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.**

\*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Minister: We come to join with all the earth in praise!

**Congregants: We come to sing a new song to the Lord,  
Who has done marvelous things.**

Minister: The Lord has shown us steadfast love and faithfulness.

**Congregants: We praise our God with joyful noises.  
joining the symphony of the earth.**

Minister: On this day of peace and gladness,  
we greet You with open hearts, our living God!

**Congregants: Let us come into His presence, and worship God!**

\*HYMN OF PRAISE 268

*Crown Him with Many Crowns*

Diademata

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION (unison)

**Gracious God, loving God, merciful God,  
we praise and thank You for bringing us together  
in fellowship, in worship, in Your presence.  
You alone are Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer,  
and we give You our deepest thanksgiving.  
In Christ, there is nothing that can separate us from Your love,**

**and so we bow now before You to confess our sins,  
trusting that You will forgive us and help us transform our lives.  
We confess to our half-hearted faith that takes the easiest paths.  
We confess to sharing Your love only with those who are like us.  
We confess that we ignore Your harder commandments,  
and that we fail to use all Your gifts to Your glory.  
Forgive us, redirect our spirits, shine Your light in our darkness,  
and help us blossom with whole-hearted faith and service.  
Hear these our silent and personal prayers.**

**\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Hear the Good News! The only one who can truly judge us  
calls us friends, family, fellow workers in the Kingdom.  
Jesus chose us over his own life, so let us choose Jesus,  
and receive his saving grace. By the power of his Holy Spirit,  
our sins are washed away, and we are transformed before God.  
All praise to our risen Lord!

**\*RESPONSE HYMN 232 *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today* Easter Hymn**

**But the pains which he endured, Alleluia!  
our salvation have procured. Alleluia!  
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!  
where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!**

**GROW SPIRITUALLY**

**THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Joshua 24:1-2, 14-18**

<sup>1</sup> Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2</sup> And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

<sup>14</sup> "Now, therefore, revere the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. <sup>15</sup> Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." <sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should

forsake the Lord to serve other gods, <sup>17</sup> for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, <sup>18</sup> and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

#### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / 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.**

ANTHEM *Now the Green Blade Rises*

Donald McCullough

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
Love live again, that with the dead has been;  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,  
Thinking that he would never wake again,  
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

Forth he came at Easter like the risen grain,  
He that for three days in the grave had lain;  
Raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
Your touch can call us back to life again:  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;  
Love is come again like what arising green.

#### MESSAGE FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

THE SECOND READING OF GOD’S WORD John 6:56-69

<sup>56</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them. <sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live

because of me. <sup>58</sup> This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” <sup>59</sup> He said these things while he was teaching in a synagogue at Capernaum. <sup>60</sup> When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” <sup>61</sup> But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup> Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup> It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup> But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones who did not believe and who was the one who would betray him. <sup>65</sup> And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.” <sup>66</sup> Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. <sup>67</sup> So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION (unison)

**Soften our ears, our Father, so that we might hear  
what You would have us to hear.**

**Open our minds, Holy Spirit, so that we might understand  
what You would have us to understand.**

**Touch our hearts, Lord Jesus, so that we might serve  
where you would have us to serve.**

**Use these words and thoughts so that Your Will and Word and path  
will be ever before us. In Your grace we pray. Amen.**

THE SERMON

*CHOOSE*

Dr. Merritt

\*HYMN OF COMMITMENT 263

*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!*

Coronation

\* PRESENTATION AND DEDICATION OF GIFTS (unison)

**Generous God, we bring You our offerings,**

**and ask that You bless them to the service of Your Kingdom.**

**Make of us stewards of Your grace, so that our gifts honor You.**

**Bless the tasks that we undertake in Your name.**

**so that we might be coworkers in Your coming Kingdom.**

**Bless the 167 hours of our week until we gather again,**

**so that the living of our lives will be our ultimate offering to You.**

**May we be Your blessings to this world, in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**\*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

(unison, from the Presbyterian "Declaration of Faith")

**In forming his people, gifting them for the work of his Kingdom,  
and sending them into the world to serve and to share his love,  
Jesus called individuals like us to be his disciples.**

**We are to share the joy of his companionship, to understand  
and to obey his teachings, and to follow him in life and death.**

**We profess that Christians today are called into his discipleship.  
Life shared with Christ and shaped and transformed by Christ  
is God's undeserved gift of grace to every one of us.**

**It is also God's demand upon every one of us,  
a demand that we confess is never perfectly fulfilled by any of us.**

**Forgiven by God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ,  
and supported in the loving fellowship of the Body of Christ,  
we strive to become more faithful and effective in our daily practice  
of the Christian life. May our living give glory to God!**

**GO FAITHFULLY**

**\*HYMN OF DEDICATION 265**

*Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun*

Duke Street

CHARGE

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

OUR SERVICE

\*Indicates the People Standing

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVE SNIDER AND LIBBY GILL, who were united in holy matrimony yesterday. May God richly bless their vows, and their life together!

THE MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST will meet Thursday, May 21st, at 8:30 at Famous Anthony's next to the Brookside Golf Course on Williamson Road. All men of Northminster are invited to join us!

PRESBYTERY OF THE PEAKS will meet this Thursday, May 21, at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church. Ministers and elders from over 100 regional Presbyterian congregations will be in attendance. Our representatives, along with the Minister, will be Sherry Moses and Pam Claterbaugh.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION will be celebrated during the morning worship service next Sunday, May 24, as part of our recognition of Pentecost. Please be in prayerful preparation as we come to the Lord's Table.

You are invited to the PCC Open House on May 29th. It will begin at 10:30 and end at 6:00 pm. with a ribbon cutting at 12:30. Because of safety concerns, they will need the names of people who are planning on attending. Please contact Lynn Kirby and she will put you on the list. The PCC is incredibly thankful to the members of Northminster for the volunteer work and contributions made to this organization. If any of you worked in the old building, you will be pleasantly surprised at how nice the new building has turned out.

### Calendar

Today	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service
Thursday	8:30 am	Men's Breakfast
Next Sunday	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service / Communion

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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WEBSITE:WWW.NORTHMINSTERPCUSA.ORG

Russ Merritt, Pastor                      Melissa Hudson, Music Director  
Susie Tallmage, Secretary  
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Pastor. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Pastor know.

**Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.**

**Members**

Bill Bailey	Joyce Barker	Rob Barker
Di Brammer	Pam Claterbaugh	Karen Smith
Maggie Hambrick	Marie Haines	Jake Hayes
Mary Anne Huff	Dennis Kincer	Joan Critzer
Ann Pace	Mac Pace	Sandy Smith
Dora Slee	Kathy Pankavich	Debbie Newman

**Friends and Family**

Nancy Assaid	Joaquin Bielawski
Shirley Basham	Donna Betters
Lucy Collier	Terry Foss
Dan Cone	Charlie Wilkerson
Glenna Myers	Tom Kirby
Connie Watkins	Jeff Midkiff
Owen Merritt	

\*THE SESSION \*

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson  
Elders: Emily Allen, Frankie Bielawski, Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Dana Esworthy, Matt Graybill, Joe Gwitt, Karen Gwitt, Maggie Hambrick, Gary Harris, Lynn Kirby, Sherry Moses, Dave Snider, Ron Staton, Greg Theimer



