

*See what love
the Father has
given us
that we should
be called
children of God*

**New Covenant Presbyterian Church
April 18, 2021 10:00am Service**



**1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE
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The Worship of God

The Third Sunday of Easter

Welcome, Announcements and Sharing of Our Vision

Lay Leader:

Preparing to Meet God

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Prelude...



There are few thinkers more profound than Augustine. Born in the year 354 and living until 430, he was philosopher, theologian, political theorist, cultural commentator, and all of these at once; and not only all of these at once, but all of these done superbly well. His words are always weighty and need to be heard again and again. He wrote much about love, approaching the topic of love the way an appreciative jeweler approaches a gem, glowing over the different lusters it radiates as light shines on it first from one angle and then from another. One word from Augustine upon which we need to linger over is as brief as it is brilliant: "Love means `I want you to be.'" Isn't that the same kind of love God has for us? After all, God is the One who created us, so surely, God wanted us to be!

Call to Worship

- L: Let all in this place be filled with joy for you are loved by God!
P: *No one here will be left out because God's love is for everyone!*
 L: Come now, let us worship; let nothing hinder you,
P: *For God sees us and loves us just as we are.*
 L: Let us worship God in spirit and truth for truly God is good!

*Hymn of Praise # 802, red book *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*



*The King of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never;
 I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine forever.*

*Where streams of living water flow my ransomed soul he leadeth,
 And where the verdant pastures grow, with food celestial feedeth.*

*Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid, and home, rejoicing, brought me.*

*In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still, thy cross before to guide me.*

Prayer of Confession

God of grace and mercy, we realize that we are unworthy to be called your children, just as we are unworthy to be called your friends. And yet, you call us son, daughter, and friend. You love us with a love unlike any we have ever known – a love that is completely unconditional. We cannot wrap our limited human minds around what it would look like to love someone unconditionally. We often try, but we fail. That is why it is so amazing that you love us, as unworthy as we are, even when we fail. We come today to confess the ways that we have rejected your love, asking that you would give us hearts that are open to receiving it, in order that we may experience the full measure of your love and learn to love one another in the same way. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

L: Hear the Good News: God is love and God's love was disclosed to us in the sending of his Son into the world to bring us life.

P: **Jesus Christ is the remedy for our sins and he is God's gift to us.**

L: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel –

P: **Thanks be to God that we are saved by God's grace!**

Meeting God in the Word

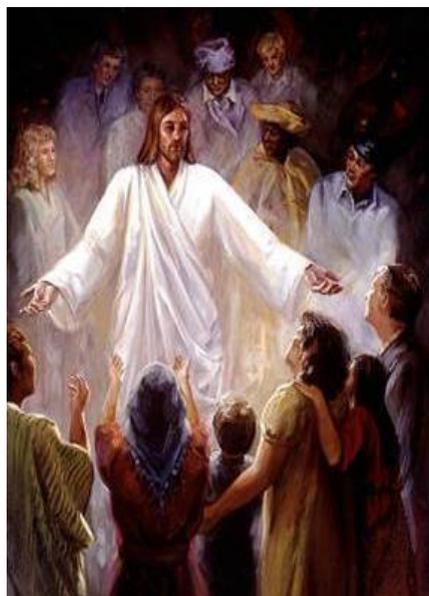
Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

Luke 24: 36b – 48

Jesus Appears to His Disciples



While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you - that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

Second Lesson

I John 3: 1-7

Children of God – That is Our Identity

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Sermon

Love Without Limits



Responding to the Word

*Hymn # 366, red book

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling; all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion; pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit; let us find the promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee:
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

*Litany of Faith

L: This is the commandment we have received: That we love one another as God has loved us.

P: We love, because God first loved us.

L: Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God;

P: And whoever fails to love does not know God.

L: For love is of God,

P: And God's love will be made complete in us.

L: We know that God abides in us and we in him, because of the testimony of his Spirit.

P: *We ourselves testify that the Father sent his Son as the Savior of the world.*

L: And God's love was revealed in Jesus the Christ;

P: *That in him, we would live in love and have the Light of Life.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Cares Chorus:

*I cast all my cares upon you.
I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime I don't know what to do,
I cast all my cares upon you.*

The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts

The Invitation *You are invited to place your offering in the basket in the back of the sanctuary.*

Prayer of Dedication

Going Out to Serve God

* Hymn # 435, red book

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

*There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea.
There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.*

*For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's Word,
And our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.*

* Blessing

L: Go from this service remembering that YOU ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD!

P: *We go knowing how much we are loved by the One who created, redeemed, and sustains us.*

L: As God's children, we are challenged to live like Jesus did, witnessing to the power and love of God.

P: *We will use our lives to worship God each and every day!*

L: And may the blessings...

*Response

*He Is Lord
He is Lord, He is Lord!
He is risen from the dead and he is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.*