

This worship service can be watched live on YouTube, as it happens, anywhere you have an internet connection. Additionally, past services will be archived so you can stay up-to-date or relive your favorite Sunday morning moments. You can find the link on our website or check it out at <https://bit.ly/FPClive>

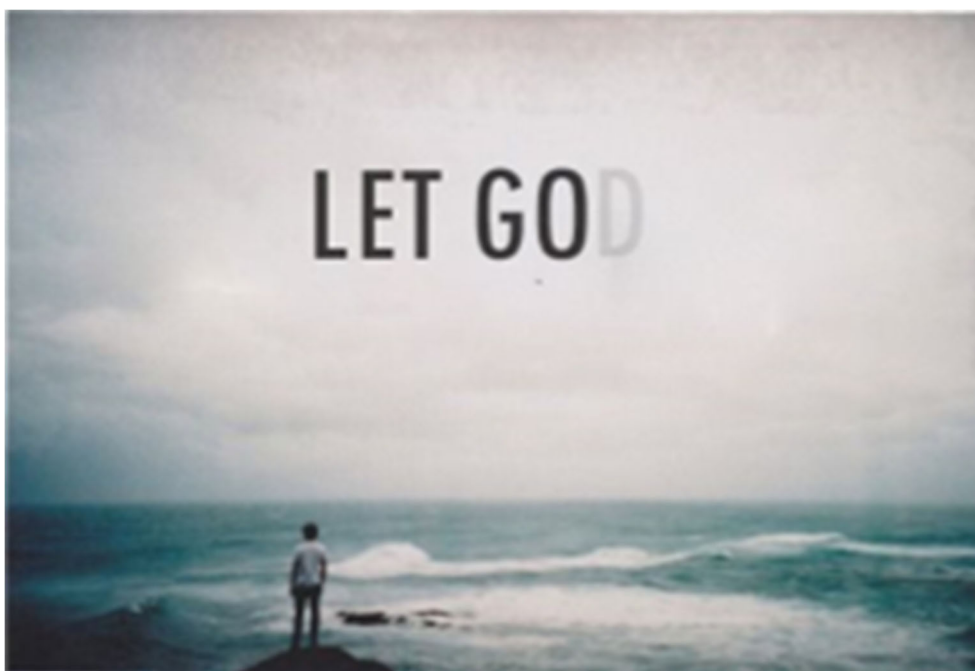
**NOTE: Sheet music for all hymns can be found at the end of this document.**



***Order of Worship***  
***May 24, 2020***

***Faith Presbyterian Church of Emmaus***

3002 N. Second Street, PO Box 507  
Emmaus, Pennsylvania 18049  
610.967.5600  
[office@faithchurchemmaus.org](mailto:office@faithchurchemmaus.org)  
[www.faithchurchemmaus.org](http://www.faithchurchemmaus.org)



**THE ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP**  
**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**10:00 AM**

**MAY 24, 2020**

THE FIRST NOTE OF THE PRELUDE begins our worship.

Please use the prelude time to turn your attention to God's presence and help. Nurturing our relationships and friendships in fellowship is essential to our life as a congregation, so please continue to do so following our time of worship.

*Those who are able are invited to stand.*

**FOCUSING UPON GOD'S PRESENCE AND VOICE**

PRELUDE

*"How Firm a Foundation"*

EARLY AMERICAN MELODY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Let the righteous be joyful! Let them rejoice before God.

**People: Let us all be jubilant with joy!**

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN #395

*"Blessed Jesus, at Your Word"*

LIEBSTER JESU

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Siblings in Christ, God not only desires our repentance, but longs to offer us forgiveness. Therefore, cast all your anxiety on God, because God cares for you eternally. Let us pray together.

**P: Loving God, we confess that we do not always bring honor and glory to your name. We are rebellious and weak; we flee before your goodness. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us by the grace and mercy of Christ, that we may rise up again in peace to love and serve your world. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

### SHARING THE PEACE

Leader: Since God has forgiven us, let us also forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us share our forgiven joy with one another.

### HYMN OF ASSURANCE #581

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen, Amen.

## **THE WORD OF GOD TO THE CHURCH**

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

#### FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

PSALM 68:1-12, 32-35

<sup>1</sup>Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him.

<sup>2</sup>As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God.

<sup>3</sup>But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy.

<sup>4</sup>Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds—his name is the LORD— be exultant before him.

<sup>5</sup>Father of orphans and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.

<sup>6</sup>God gives the desolate a home to live in; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in a parched land.

<sup>7</sup>O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, Selah

<sup>8</sup>the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

<sup>9</sup>Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad; you restored your heritage when it languished;

<sup>10</sup>your flock found a dwelling in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

<sup>11</sup>The Lord gives the command; great is the company of those who bore the tidings:

<sup>12</sup>“The kings of the armies, they flee, they flee!” The women at home divide the spoil,

<sup>32</sup>Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord, Selah

<sup>33</sup>O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens; listen, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.

<sup>34</sup>Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel; and whose power is in the skies.

<sup>35</sup>Awesome is God in his sanctuary, the God of Israel; he gives power and strength to his people. Blessed be God!

ANTHEM

*“Lord, Make Us Worthy”*

NATALIE SLEETH

Sandy Gingrich, Dianne Macdonald & Ann Greenwood

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

1 PETER 5:6-11

<sup>6</sup>Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. <sup>7</sup>Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

<sup>8</sup>Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

<sup>10</sup>And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup>To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

SERMON

*"Let Go, Let God"*

REV. REBECCA MALLOZZI

HYMN #475

*"Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing"*

NETTLETON

SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS

INTERCESSIONS AND PETITIONS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*(Please use "debts & debtors".)*

GLORY TO GOD HYMNAL – PG. 35

**OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD**

CALL FOR OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY

*"Lead Me, Guide Me"*

DORIS AKERS

DEDICATION HYMN #606

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God, above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN #547

*"Go, My Children, with My Blessing"*

AR HYDY NOS

CHARGE & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*"We Will Walk with God"*

SWAZILAND MELODY

## 395 Blessed Jesus, at Your Word

1 Bless - ed Je - sus, at your word we have come a -  
 2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est  
 3 Glo - rious Lord, your - self im - part, Light of Light, from

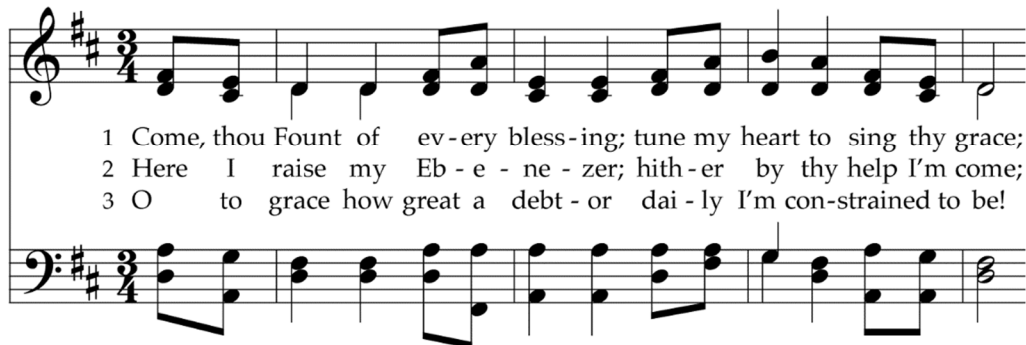
gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred  
 dark - ness shroud - ed, till your Spir - it breaks our night,  
 God pro - ceed - ing. Touch our lips and ears and heart;

and in glow - ing faith be near you. By your gos - pel  
 fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and  
 help us by your Spir - it's plead - ing. Hear the cry your

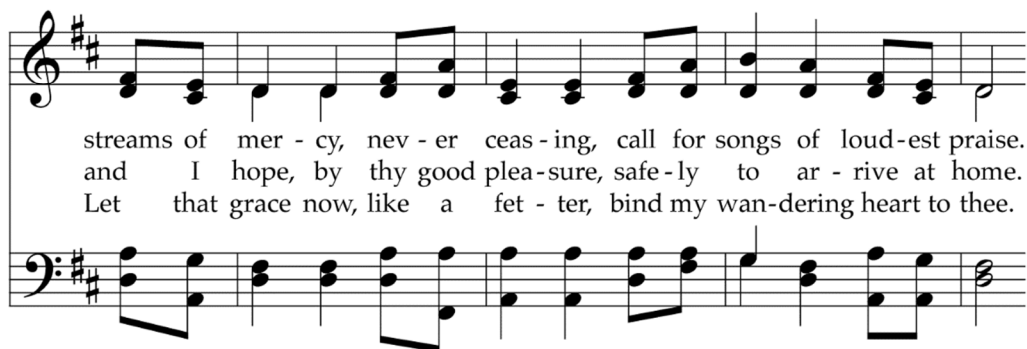
true and ho - ly, teach us, Lord, to love you sole - ly.  
 all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.  
 church now rais - es; hear, and bless our prayers and prais - es.

Originally conceived to be sung before the sermon, this hymn assumes a congregation that assembles regularly, and it needs to be placed near the beginning rather than the end of worship. The simple repetitive tune reinforces the text's sense of receptivity and expectation.

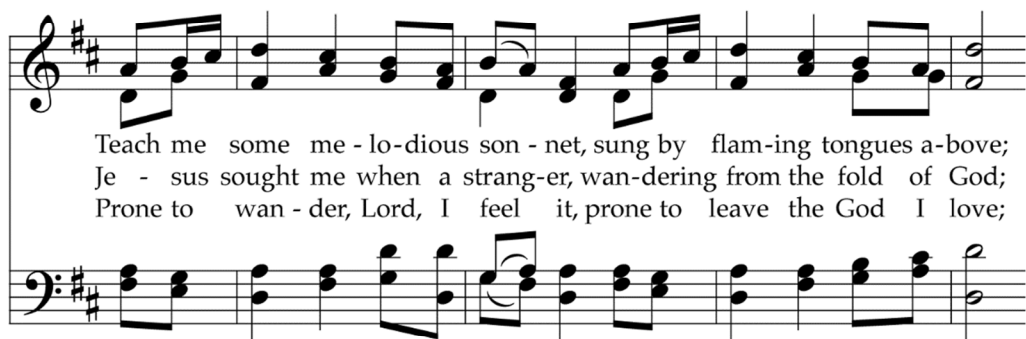
## Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 475



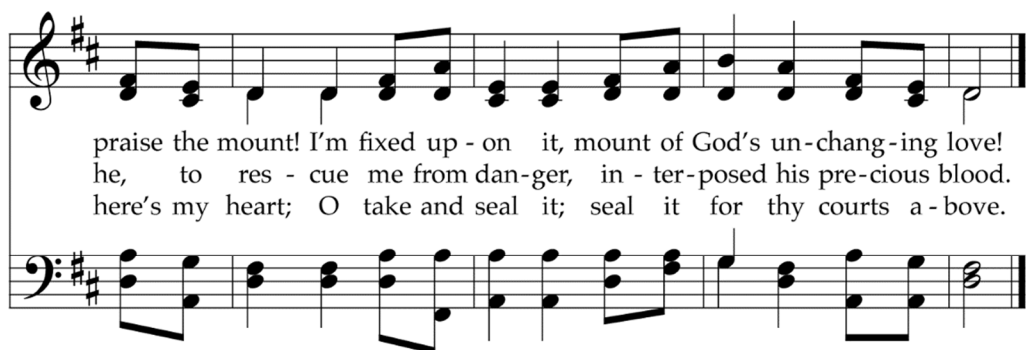
1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;  
3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.  
and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.  
Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;  
Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;  
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;



praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!  
he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.  
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, this text is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton, who probably did not compose it.

# Go, My Children, with My Blessing 547

1 "Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, nev-er a-lone.  
 2 "Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure.  
 3 "Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos-er to me.

Wak-ing, sleep-ing, I am with you, you are my own.  
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
 Grow in love and love by serv-ing, joy-ful and free.

In my love's bap-tis-mal riv-er I have made you mine for-  
 Here you heard my dear Son's sto-ry; here you touched him, saw his  
 Here my Spir-it's pow-er filled you; here my ten-der com-fort

ev-er. Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, you are my own."  
 glo-ry. Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure."  
 stilled you. Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, joy-ful and free."

Because this Welsh melody usually sets evening texts, the author was asked to create one for use in daytime. His recasting of the Aaronic blessing in Numbers 6:22-27 imagines that passage as a benediction that might be spoken by God at the conclusion of a worship service.

# Faith Life

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2020

Jesus prayed 2,000 years ago that all his followers would be one. Whatever our differences, we are united in him.

## SUNDAY MORNING FELLOWSHIP

Please join us on Zoom for Fellowship on Sunday Mornings following Worship. The link for Sunday Morning Fellowship can be found in the Thursday email blast. If you would like to be added to the list to receive these emails, please contact the office.

## PENTECOST OFFERING

### Building a Life of Faith

The **Ministries for Youth** program receives **25%** of the **Pentecost Offering**. This program provides many online resources for youth and youth leaders such as: Presbyterian Youth Book Club, Quick Sheets and d365.org., an online youth devotional.

It also helps fund the Presbyterian **Youth Triennium**. We had **two youths, Evan Gill and Ella Weise** attend this event in 2019.

Please consider supporting these important programs for the youth by contributing to the **PENTECOST OFFERING on May 31st**.

From Evan Gill:

Triennium was a great experience! Our Lehigh delegation consisted of four people and came to grow very close to each other and explored Purdue's expansive campus. While together we learned about ways that we can take our experiences home with us and share with the congregation such as doing small mission projects in our community that suits its need's the most. Anyone who is thinking about triennium should sign up since it is the most that a youth can learn how to serve God and find God's purpose for you.

## PHOTO SHOOT—SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendars! The Lifetouch Photo Directory sessions have been rescheduled for August 4-6. Scheduling is not yet available. Further information will be provided as soon as it known.



5/23	Christine Smits
5/26	Tammi Howorth
5/27	Platte Moring, Robert Vitale
5/29	Joanne Herring, Liliana Spak

## LOOKING AHEAD...

\*No Sunday School

July 4.....	Independence Day
Aug. 4-6 .....	Photo Directory Photo Shoot Sessions
Sept. 7 .....	Labor Day: Church Office closed
Oct. 12.....	Columbus Day: Church Office closed
Nov. 3 .....	Election Day

## **TWO WEEKS OF FAITH**

This calendar is prepared a few days prior to distribution. Please see the church [website](#) for the most up-to-date information. Room Numbers, indicating where meetings will be held (*when known*), are shown in parentheses following the listing.

The church parking lot will be paved and sealed, beginning Tuesday.  
The parking lot will not be available to automobile traffic.

## THIS WEEK

### Sunday, May 24

10:00 AM— Worship Service: online only  
5:00 PM— Youth Group year-end party (Zoom)

### Monday, May 25

### Tuesday, May 26

7:30 PM— Fellowship Committee (Zoom)

Church Office Closed

### Wednesday, May 27

3:30 PM— Zoom Story Time for Kids

Church Office Closed

### Thursday, May 28

7:00 PM— Vision Team (Z)  
7:00 PM— Narcotics Anonymous (FH)

Church Office Closed

### Friday, May 29

Church Office Closed

### Saturday, May 30

## NEXT WEEK

### Sunday, May 31

10:00 AM— Worship Service: online only

Pentecost

### Monday, June 1

7:00 PM— Discipleship Committee (Z)

### Tuesday, June 2

Primary Election Voting  
7:00 PM— Stewardship Committee (FH)

Church Office Closed

### Wednesday, June 3

3:30 PM— Zoom Story Time for Kids  
6:00 PM— Brownie Troop (4)

Church Office Closed

### Thursday, June 4

7:00 PM— Narcotics Anonymous (FH)

Church Office Closed

### Friday, June 5

Church Office Closed

### Saturday, June 6

9:00 AM— Crazy Quilters (FH)



## PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

### A FOUNDATION OF FAITH

established during  
childhood through  
young adulthood  
helps ensure lifelong  
faith and service.  
When you give to the  
Pentecost Offering,  
you are helping to  
provide opportunities  
for young people to  
grow and share in  
their faith in Christ.



### WAYS TO GIVE —



Through your congregation



Text YOUNG to 56512  
to learn more or donate



Give online at  
[pcusa.org/pentecost](http://pcusa.org/pentecost)



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
**Presbyterian Mission**

defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning and witness, and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

The Pentecost Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in

12144-20-034  
COVER ART: ILLUSTRATED MINISTRY



PENTECOST  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

## BUILDING GOD'S HOUSEHOLD THROUGH EDUCATION

God's youngest family members need support for developing their full potential in both faith and life.

Susan Byrne, who attends First Presbyterian Church of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, helps organize tutors for Willow Brook Elementary School, and nearly half come from First Presbyterian.

Willow Brook is in a low-income neighborhood and many of the students' parents are working multiple jobs to make ends meet, while others are incarcerated or absent.

The second grader that Susan tutors holds her hand the whole time they are together, working on building his reading skills. She says, "No one is as glad to see me all week as that little boy. He's so bright but just needed a little help with reading."

The Pentecost Offering supports the education of every child in this country through the *Educate a Child, Transform the World* national initiative. **The portion we retain, supports programs for children right here in our own community.**



Susan and her student.

During this Pentecost season,  
we join together to build a life of faith  
and build the household of God  
with our children, youth  
and young adults.

- 40%** **stays with this congregation** to develop and support programs for young people in our own church and community.
- 25%** **supports Young Adult Volunteers** (YAV), serving in communities around the world, and growing as leaders through transformative Christian service.
- 25%** **supports Ministries with Youth** to help guide our youth by uniting them in Christ and lifting them up as leaders and messengers of God's word
- 10%** **is devoted to children at-risk** to improve education and provide safe havens.

Our congregation is joining the whole church in building for our future, in building individual lives of faith.

*Won't you join us?*

**IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.**

A FOUNDATION  
OF FAITH  
established during  
childhood through  
young adulthood  
helps ensure lifelong  
faith and service.  
When you give to the  
Pentecost Offering,  
you are helping to  
provide opportunities  
for young people to  
grow and share in  
their faith in Christ.



### WAYS TO GIVE —



Through your congregation



Text YOUNG to 56512  
to learn more or donate



Give online at  
[pcusa.org/pentecost](http://pcusa.org/pentecost)

# God, from my youth you have taught me.

— PSALM 71:17

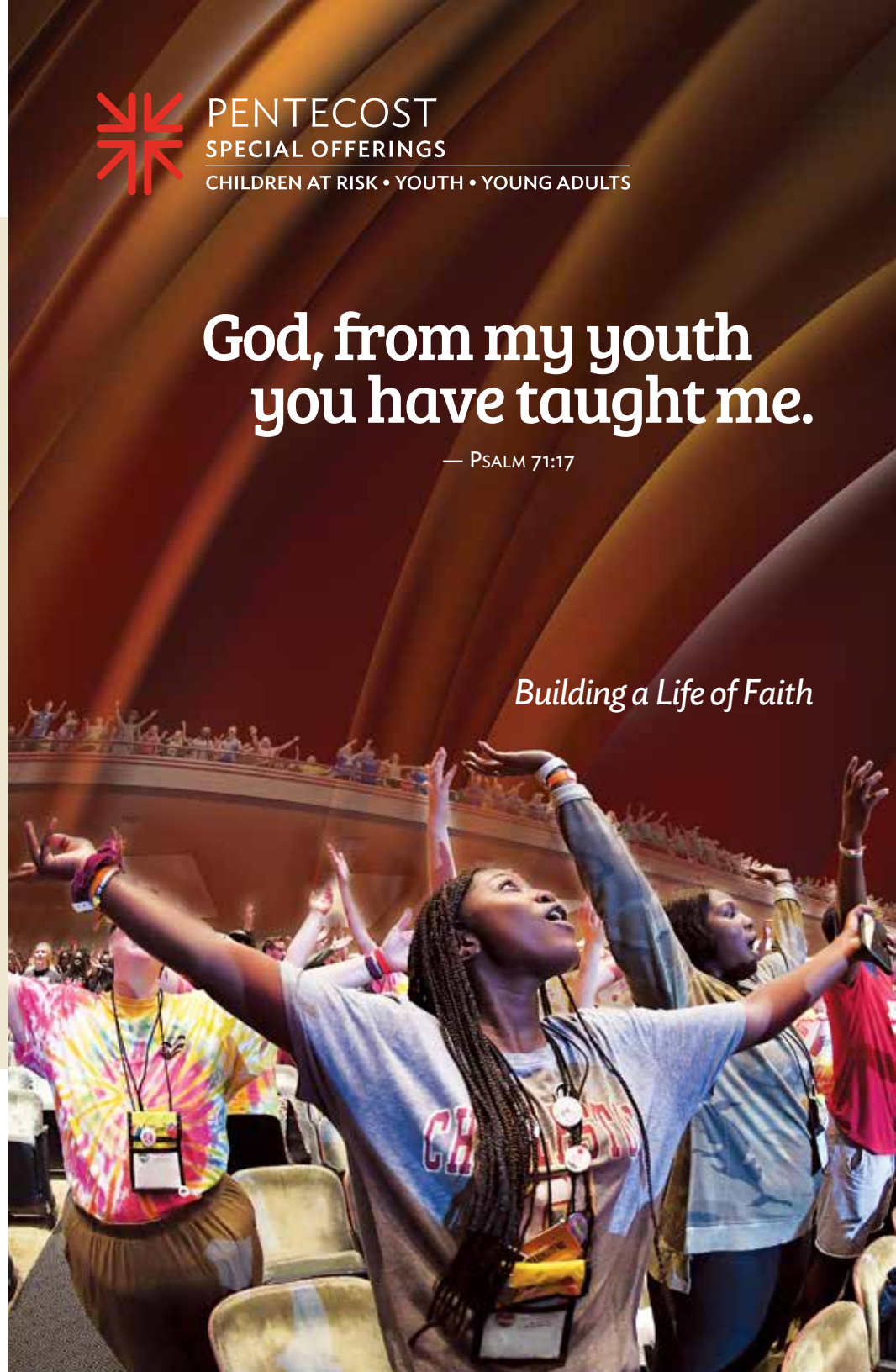
*Building a Life of Faith*



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
**Presbyterian Mission**

defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning and witness, and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

The Pentecost Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in





## Right Here, Right Now

Rev. Dr. David Gambrell attends Highland Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, where he has guided the faith journey of many young people—including his own daughters. Last summer he was asked to speak at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium.

“Our kids need to know they are valued in this moment—their gifts, wisdom and experiences are important,” David explained. “They need to know that we take them seriously and honor them as members of Christ’s body, and that we want to learn from them even as they learn from us.”

“We tend to say something like ‘we’re investing in the future because the youth are the future of our Church,’” said Gambrell. “But our youth already have gifts to give and important ways to serve and lead in the church—right now.”

As each of us considers a gift to the Pentecost Offering, David reminds us that that ministry with youth is not just about the future, but also about being with them—right here, right now.



PHOTOS: LEFT-MICHAEL ERDELYI, RIGHT-DAVID GAMBRELL

THE PENTECOST OFFERING HELPS OUR YOUTH  
BEGIN LIFE WITH A STRONG START—  
A SOLID FOUNDATION OF FAITH  
FORMED IN THE YEARS FROM CHILDHOOD  
THROUGH YOUNG ADULTHOOD.



**40%**

**stays with this congregation**

to develop and support programs for young people  
in our own church and community.



**25%**

**supports Young Adult Volunteers (YAV),**

serving in communities around the world, and growing as leaders  
through transformative Christian service.



**25%**

**supports Ministries with Youth**

to help guide our youth by uniting them in Christ  
and lifting them up as leaders and messengers of God’s word



**10%**

**is devoted to children at-risk**

to improve education and provide safe havens.

Our congregation is joining the whole church  
in building for our future, in building individual lives of faith.

Won’t you join us?

**IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.**

## YES, CONGREGATIONS CAN LEARN NEW HABITS

A regional church officer told of visiting a church with a puzzling worship practice. Whenever it came time to recite the Apostle's Creed, worshippers turned toward the back of the church. Puzzled, he asked why. An long-time member explained that years ago the words to the creed were posted on the rear wall. The fixture was removed when the sanctuary was renovated, but the habit remained.

## Three Ways Habits Are Formed

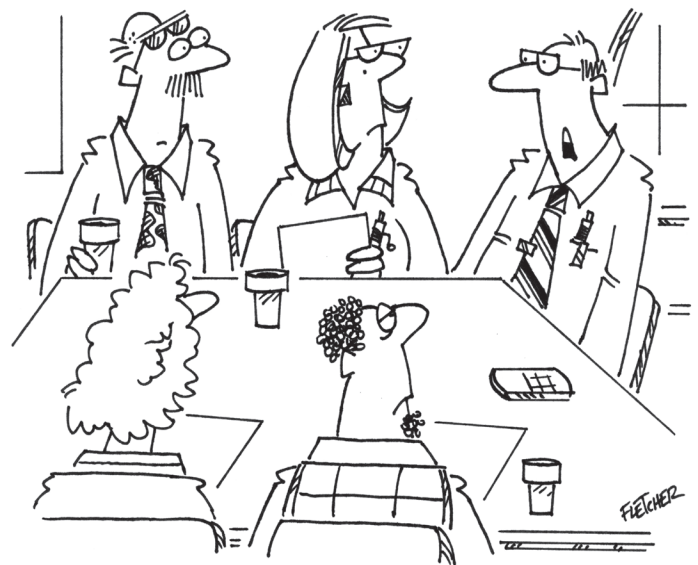
Like it or not, church life is governed to a large extent by habit. According to psychologist Wendy Wood, despite the importance we place on decision making, much of life resists executive control, operating outside of human awareness as a “second self.” In a widely publicized study, Wood investigated the role that automatic actions (habits) played in everyday life. To her surprise, she found that 43 percent of the time our actions are habitual. This includes not only common morning routines, but also working, eating, socializing, and exercising.<sup>1</sup>

For the congregation, habits may govern how meetings are designed, how decisions are made, who speaks to whom after worship, where the light bulbs are stored, or any of a wide array of practices that make up church life in its totality. Given how pervasive habits are, it's more realistic to think in terms of dropping and adding habits rather than rejecting them and there are three key ways these habits are formed.

**Context Makes a Difference.** Context includes anything in the surrounding world that either drives or restrains our action, including people. In 1970, a new federal law banning cigarette ads on television and radio led to a decline in smoking in a way that the Surgeon General's warnings failed to do. This change in the environment interfered with the automatic nature of smoking, allowing change.

For congregations, the physical context can either make it easier or more difficult for a habit to form. Redesigning the seating in a sanctuary or introducing café tables in the lobby or vestibule can strengthen the habit of conversation. Occasionally shifting the governing board's meeting to a local café can change the way board members relate to each other and their work.

**Repetition Makes it Second Nature.** Habits do not develop all at once, but rather develop gradually through repetition. Every time an action is repeated, it takes both less time and less conscious thought than before. Eventually it becomes second nature. For example, every week in worship the collection plate is passed at the same time and in the same manner as before. Through the repetition of this habit, church members and guests learn the importance of giving. While the fall stewardship campaign highlights the importance of consciously determining what to give,



"SINCE NO ONE CAN REMEMBER THE ORIGIN OF THIS PARTICULAR CHURCH HABIT, I MOVE THAT IT BE UPGRADED TO A TRADITION."

passing the offering plate reinforces the stewardship ideal at a less conscious level. It does this through repetition.

**Rewards Keep it Going.** The repetition required to develop a habit from scratch can become monotonous. Rewards can keep motivation high. When development workers in Western Cape, South Africa, pondered how to motivate four-year-olds from impoverished families to wash their hands before meals or after using the toilet, they hit upon the idea of child-sized, toy-filled soap. Each bar was translucent and brightly colored, with a ball or plastic fish in the center. They gave out a new bar every two weeks for two months. It worked.

Can playful rewards work for congregations? Unexpected rewards seem to work best, which explains why electronic slots and video poker are the most popular activities at casinos, and why the average American checks a smartphone forty-six times per day.<sup>2</sup> This fact, if nothing else, argues for introducing a variety of themes, prayers, songs, and messages to every worship service. This variety rewards repeated attendance and fosters strong worship habits.

### The Role of Disruption

Though unexpected and sometimes unwelcome, disruptions can make it easier to let go of old habits and adopt new ones. Major life events such as moving, a new job, marriage, or children can remove the predictability and the cues that trigger habits, freeing the individual to act in new ways. Congregations can experience major disruptions, as the Reverend Sylvia Barrett found when fire destroyed her United Methodist church in the upstate village of Milford, New York. Engaging a study process to determine whether to rebuild, church leaders stumbled upon an insight: “It’s not about the building, but the people.” After rebuilding, the group also chose to form new habits by paying more attention to their neighbors and offering new small-group opportunities.

In 2017, Jason Butler, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, called a total halt in operations. The church, founded in 1942, had dwindled to fifty members. Butler believed “an excess of bad habits” was to blame. For six months, the church stopped all its regular activities—worship, Sunday school, choir, prayer groups, women’s studies, and leadership meetings. Instead, church members

spent time getting to know people in the neighborhood and planning for a relaunch. After the hiatus, the church relaunched as Open Table United Methodist Church. Years later, its membership has grown to two hundred and fifty. “Disruption allowed us to stop doing the things that were probably preventing us from seeing ourselves and our future clearly. . . . It opened a crack in the system for change and opened our minds to a reimagination.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Role of Other People

Context is not just physical. Other people can serve as the context that shapes habits. When Rick Warren founded Saddleback Church, Irvine, California, in 1979, he focused on persons who never developed the habit of church attendance. “We thought long and hard about habitualizing faith, breaking it down into pieces. . . . The only way to get people to take responsibility for their spiritual maturity is to teach them *habits* of faith.” As the church grew, and Warren struggled with exhaustion, he shifted teaching responsibility from his shoulders to church members themselves, and from the church building to members’ homes. Eventually, every church member was assigned to a small group that met once a week. This made church participation into a habit and the home meetings are the cornerstone of growth. Within the group, “close friends help you focus on how to be faithful.”<sup>4</sup>

Any congregation can benefit from closer attention to its “second self.” Habits that are aligned with the church’s goals can replace habits that cut against those goals. By keeping a set of clearly defined, ambitious goals front and center, church leaders can move the congregation in the direction of its dreams, but only if its automatic actions are aligned with those goals.

---

1. Wendy Wood, *Good Habits, Bad Habits: The Science of Making Positive Changes That Stick* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2019), 24.

2. *Ibid.*, 123–129.

3. Jason Butler, “Disruption Is Often the Key to Renewal,” *Faith & Leadership*, July 23, 2019. [https://faithandleadership.com/jason-butler-disruption-often-key-renewal?utm\\_source=albanweekly&utm\\_medium=content&utm\\_campaign=faith\\_leadership](https://faithandleadership.com/jason-butler-disruption-often-key-renewal?utm_source=albanweekly&utm_medium=content&utm_campaign=faith_leadership)

4. Charles Duhigg, *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*, (New York: Random House, 2012), 235–237.

## SIX TOOLS FOR MANAGING VOLUNTEERS

At its most basic level, managing volunteers means supporting their work in order to sustain their activity over time. The apostle Paul urges leaders “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12), which indicates that as we prepare others (equipping), we make them and other believers (the body of Christ) stronger and stronger (building up). The equipping metaphor as applied to volunteer management is both positive and growth oriented, but it does not explain how to accomplish it. Volunteer management requires at least six tools.

### Orientation

The volunteer should be provided with a job description laying out what he or she will be doing.<sup>1</sup> An orientation program goes further by offering an introduction to what it will be like for the volunteer once the work begins. An effective orientation can reinforce the volunteer’s initial decision to get involved, provide a connection with the wider purpose of the program, and reduce volunteer turnover. Of course, the orientation also should provide information a new volunteer will need. If unclear about what to include, ask several of the more experienced volunteers for their opinion.<sup>2</sup>

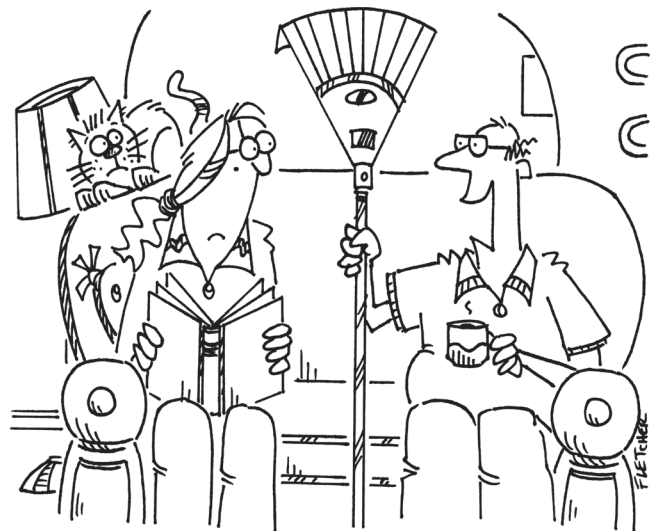
### Volunteer Handbook

At the orientation, plan to distribute a volunteer handbook. This book provides information about procedures and policies that may have been reviewed verbally in the orientation but may not be readily remembered due to information overload. *Policies* provide general guidance for what is expected of the volunteer on the job. For example, youth mission volunteers need to agree to a policy of never having an adult with a minor in a car alone. *Procedures* have to do with practical guidance on how to get the job done. For example, volunteers may need to be told the best procedure for lining up a substitute volunteer in case of sickness. Additionally, the handbook can include areas such as the ministry’s purpose and values,

organizational structure, dress codes, safety and security information, and how the work will be evaluated.

### Training Session

Nearly all volunteer positions require some sort of training, which might be anything from an informal conversation about how to operate the copy machine or a detailed set of instructions for volunteers canvassing the neighborhood. Before planning to hold a training session, first determine the need. Some experts refer to this practice as “gap analysis” because it involves identifying the space between what people know and what they need to know. Begin by writing a few learning objectives for the students. What can realistically be accomplished by the end of the session? Next, write a class outline. Some trainers might regard an outline as a creativity killer, but it need not be so. Having a sequence of steps prepared ahead of time can lend confidence and cure unexpected jitters that may arise once the training session begins. Spontaneity can still occur within structure. Be sure to practice ahead of time by walking through the session,



“SUNDAY’S SERMON ON THE SIGNIFICANCE  
OF CHURCH VOLUNTEERS WAS TRULY INSPIRING...  
I SIGNED YOU UP FOR THE LAWN CARE TEAM.”

paying attention to the timing of the activities and thinking about how to set up the location where the training will take place. Finally, ask for feedback from students through a simple evaluation near the end of the session.<sup>3</sup>

## Setting Expectations

Expectations, defined as “our assumptions about the future—how we anticipate things will go,” can often determine whether the volunteer has a worthwhile experience.<sup>4</sup> Be clear with volunteers about expectations. Assume they want to do their best and that it may be the trainer’s own failure to communicate that is at fault whenever expectations are not met. Tell the volunteer not just what is to be done but how it is to be done. Every three to six months, ask what they need that they’re not getting and what they’d like to know about their volunteer job that they don’t know.<sup>5</sup>

## Evaluation

There are two types of evaluation that must be done: evaluating the ministry itself and evaluating the volunteers as individuals. Evaluation and planning are closely connected. Only by developing a mission statement and strategic plan will it be possible to evaluate it later. Did the plan get accomplished within the expected timeline and within budget?<sup>6</sup>

Evaluating volunteers as individuals constitutes the second task, and it can be affirming and celebratory. Performance reviews offer an opportunity for the leader who assigned the job and the volunteer who performs it to talk about how things are going. It is important to schedule such meetings on a regular basis. Marlene Wilson sums up the attitude that leaders should take toward evaluation: “Performance reviews should be nonthreatening, constructive, supportive, flexible, and empowering. The aim: to encourage volunteers to stretch for high standards and determine how the church can help the volunteer achieve his or her goals.”<sup>7</sup>

## Recognition

Leaders should formally recognize the volunteer’s contribution. It’s not possible to offer too much appreciation! While we tend to think of recognition as occurring at the end of a project, recognition should take place throughout the volunteer experience. Betty Stallings, a recognition expert, describes the “Four Ps” of recognition: make it *personal*, *plentiful*, *powerful*, and *practical*.

*Making it personal* means crafting a thank you that validates the person in a way unique to them. For instance,

one organization sent its staff members a card of recognition on the anniversary on the date when they started working there. *Making it plentiful* means doing it early and often in order to help spread the attitude of recognition throughout the entire work team. *Making it powerful* means recognizing the importance of small symbolic acts, such as the conference organizer who drew out of her pocket a partial roll of Lifesavers at the end of the meeting, handed one to her most trusted assistant, and said, “You’ve been a real Lifesaver today!”<sup>8</sup> *Making it practical* means addressing the excuses people make for not providing recognition, such as lack of money in the budget or arguing that volunteers say they do not need recognition. To counter these objections, point out the ways in which recognition sustains the work by encouraging everyone involved.<sup>9</sup>

## A Process, Not a Program

Managing volunteers is a process, not a program. It is too complex to be encapsulated neatly in a short space.<sup>10</sup> As the apostle Paul’s metaphor implies, maintaining a healthy body of volunteers requires an ongoing effort of nourishment and support. The more continual the encouragement and support, the stronger the body grows in its ministry to the community.

---

1. See Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Job Descriptions and Action Plans*, vol. 3, *Group’s Volunteer Leadership Series* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2004) for detailed instruction on how to design job descriptions.

2. Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Orientation and Training*, vol. 5, *Group’s Volunteer Leadership Series* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2004), 9–19.

3. Ibid., 55–69. For a sample evaluation form, see p. 101.

4. Marlene Wilson, *Volunteer Encouragement, Evaluation, and Accountability*, vol. 6, *Group’s Volunteer Leadership Series* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2004), 9.

5. Ibid., 17.

6. For more detail on planning and evaluating programs, see Kathleen A. Cahalan, *Projects That Matter: Successful Planning and Evaluation for Religious Organizations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014).

7. Wilson, *Volunteer Encouragement*, 67.

8. Ibid., 91.

9. Ibid., 83–92.

10. To go deeper into this subject, see Wilson, *Group’s Volunteer Leadership Series*, or Sue Mallory and Brad Smith, *The Equipping Church Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001). For general resources on working with volunteers, see the website of Energize, Inc., a training, consulting, and publishing firm specializing in volunteerism, at [www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com).

\* This article has been adapted from Dana Horrell’s book, *Engage! Tools for Ministry in the Community* (Fortress Press, 2019).