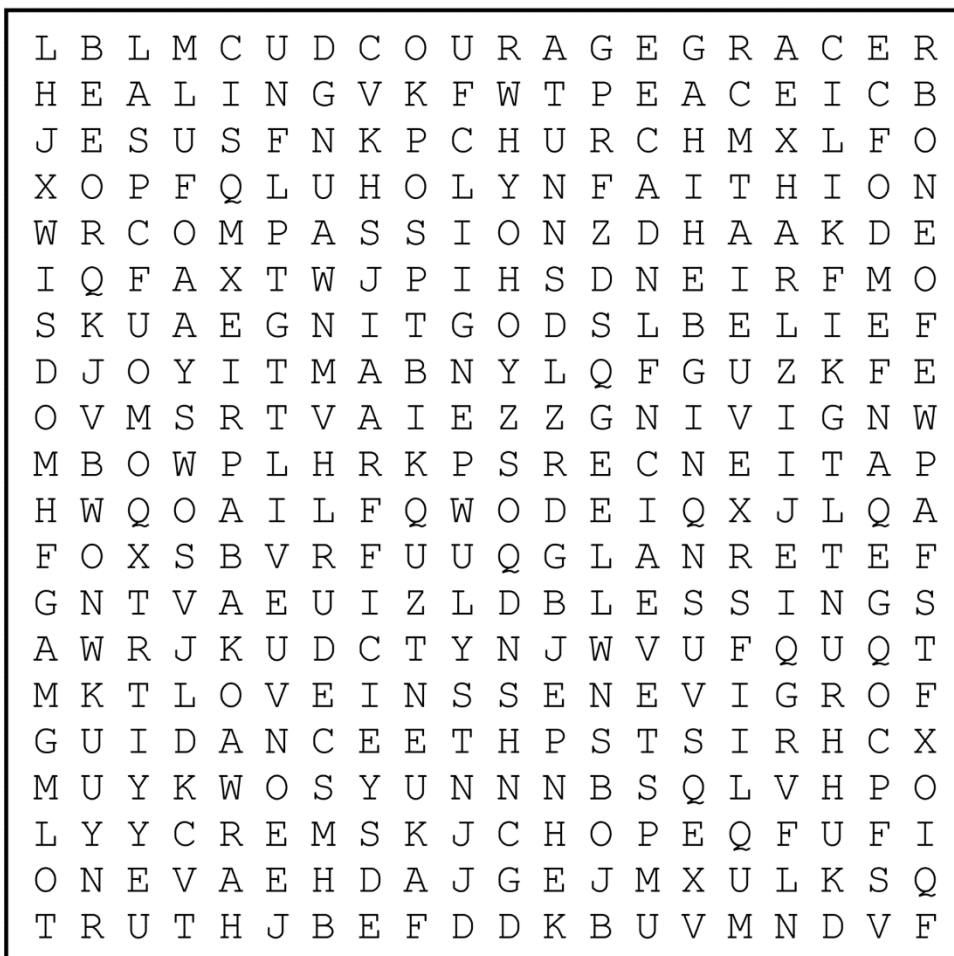


Church is Fun Word Search



BELIEF
BLESSINGS
CHRIST
CHURCH
COMPASSION
COURAGE
ETERNAL
FAITH
FAITHFULNESS
FORGIVENESS

FRIENDSHIP
GIVING
GOD
GRACE
GUIDANCE
HEALING
HEAVEN
HOLY
HOPE
JESUS

JOY
LOVE
MERCY
OBEDIENCE
PATIENCE
PEACE
SALVATION
SPIRIT
TRUTH
WISDOM

OUR SERVICE OF WORSHIP, SEPTEMBER 3, 2023 WESTWOOD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

Welcome and Announcements

[Please take a moment to silence all mobile devices and prepare for worship.]

Prelude: “Sonatina from ‘God’s Time Is the Best’”—J.S. Bach

[Where indicated (*), those who are able are invited to stand.]*

Ring of the Tower Bell

* Call to Worship *(Responsive)*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Who among us is seeking the wisdom of God?

We long to hear God’s Word spoken to our hearts.

Who among us is seeking God’s bright and holy truth?

We long to learn the ways of wisdom and righteousness.

Who among us is seeking a Spirit-filled life?

We long to live lives of holiness and light.

God grants God’s wisdom generously to all who ask.

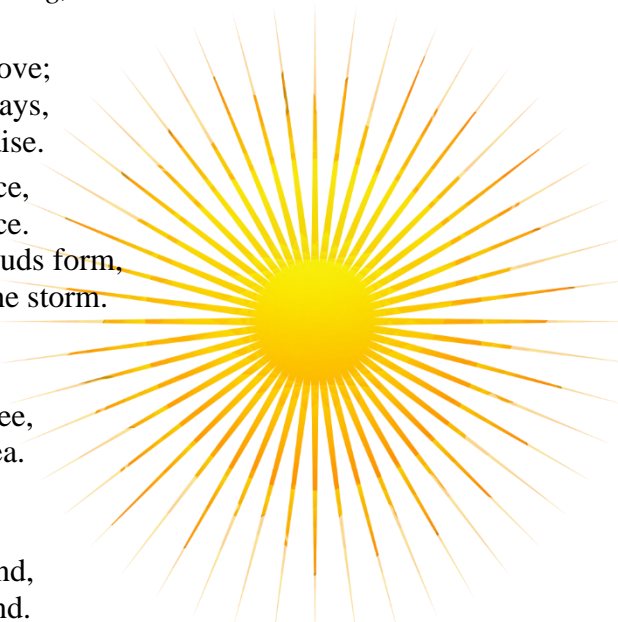
We come near, as people of God!

Let us worship in spirit, wisdom and truth.

Opening Prayer *(Leader only)*

* **Hymn No. 476 (vv. 1-3, 5): “O Worship the King, All Glorious Above”**

O worship the King, all glorious above!
O gratefully sing God’s power and God’s love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.
O tell of God’s might, O sing of God’s grace,
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.
The chariots of heaven the deep thunderclouds form,
And bright is God’s path on the wings of the storm.
The earth with its store of wonders untold,
Almighty, thy power hath founded of old;
Hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree,
And round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.
Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
In thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.



Invitation to Confession and Prayer of Confession (*Unison*)

Merciful God, you know us so well. We like to think that we can hide from you, but we are just kidding ourselves. You have offered us new life and invited us into ministries of peace and justice, but time after time we turn our back on you and the opportunities for service and witness that you provide. But even when we do, you forgive us. Help us to accept this gift of grace and to turn around and listen to your words of hope. Remind us again that you require compassion and mercy in all who serve you; that you will guide our steps and our lives. Give us courage to truly be your witnesses in this world. We ask this in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Moment of Silent, Personal Reflection and Confession

Assurance of Pardon (*Based on Joel 2:12-13, Romans 5:1—responsive*)

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

May that peace—the peace of Christ—be with you, now and always.
And also with you.

MOMENT FOR MEDITATION: SERVING GOD

We will never know the joy of self-sacrifice until we surrender in every detail of our lives. Yet self-surrender is the most difficult thing for us to do. But as soon as we do totally surrender, abandoning ourselves to Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives us a taste of His joy. The ultimate goal of self-sacrifice is to lay down our lives for our Friend. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, our greatest desire is to lay down our lives for Jesus. Yet the thought of self-sacrifice never even crosses our minds, because sacrifice is the Holy Spirit’s ultimate expression of love.

Our Lord is our example of a life of self-sacrifice, and He perfectly exemplified Psalm 40:8, “I delight to do Your will, O my God....” He endured tremendous personal sacrifice, yet with overflowing joy. Have I ever yielded myself in absolute submission to Jesus Christ? If He is not the One to whom I am looking for direction and guidance, then there is no benefit in my sacrifice. But when my sacrifice is made with my eyes focused on Him, slowly but surely His molding influence becomes evident in my life.

Beware of letting your natural desires hinder your walk in love before God. One of the cruelest ways to kill natural love is through the rejection that results from having built the love on natural desires. But the one true desire of a saint is the Lord Jesus. Love for God is not something sentimental or emotional—for a saint to love as God loves is the most practical thing imaginable. “I have called you friends....” Our friendship with Jesus is based on the new life He created in us, which has no resemblance or attraction to our old life but only to God’s life. It’s a life that’s completely humble, pure, and devoted to God.

When God wants to drill a man, and thrill a man, and skill a man,
When God wants to mold a man to play the noblest part; when he yearns with all his heart
To create so great and bold a man that all the world shall be amazed, watch His methods,
watch His ways!

~ Oswald Chambers

How He ruthlessly perfects whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him, and with mighty blows converts him
Into trial shapes of clay which only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying and he lifts beseeching hands!
How He bends but never breaks when his good He undertakes;
How He uses whom He chooses, and with every purpose fuses him;
By every act induces him to try His splendor out—God knows what He’s about.

~ Author Unknown

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

✚ **September WestFed Food Pantry needs:** Soup, crackers, and toothpaste.

✚ **This Week's Flowers Are Given:**

- ♥ by Jan & Larry Tepe in memory of our parents.
- ♥ toward a Happy Heavenly Birthday, Dad, from your Pearson family.

✚ **Prayers are requested for:**

- ♥ DJ Hines, Sandy Morris' brother-in-law, with on-going health issues.
- ♥ Carla Barlow, who is under hospice care in Baltimore, and her family.
- ♥ Heather, a friend of Marty Grote's daughter-in-law Sarah, recovering from a serious accident. Marty is Susan Greenlee's sister.
- ♥ Rudy Bruno, a friend of Barb Nieman, dealing with health issues.
- ♥ Emily, Linda Gardener's daughter, prayers for personal matters.
- ♥ Walt Albers, Linda Gardner's brother, has started chemotherapy.
- ♥ Kathy O'Connell, Chris O'Connell's aunt, recovering from a stroke.
- ♥ Diane Ringshauser, who is now in remission.
- ♥ Pierce Teepen, son of Alyssa and Tyler, friends of Rhonda Boddy.
- ♥ Diana Jackson, Rhonda's sister-in-law, undergoing chemotherapy.
- ♥ Kristine Von Holle, a friend of Sandy Morris, with kidney issues.
- ♥ Linda Kugele who continues to deal with breathing issues.
- ♥ Our homebound members and friends.
- ♥ Our Scouting units, their families and leaders.
- ♥ Our Session, our committees, volunteers and staff.
- ♥ The Presbytery of Cincinnati, and it's committees, leaders and staff.

PRAY
without ceasing

* **Gloria Patri** (*Unison*)

**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.**

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

First Scripture Reading: *Ecclesiastes 1:12-14, 12:11-14* (New King James Version)

¹²I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this burdensome task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised. ¹⁴I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all *is* vanity and grasping for the wind.

¹¹The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd. ¹²And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books *there is* no end, and much study *is* wearisome to the flesh. ¹³Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. ¹⁴For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Epistle Reading: *1 Corinthians 1:18-25* (NKJV)

¹⁸For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." ²⁰Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²²For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Gospel Reading: *Luke 12:22-31* (NKJV)

²²Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. ²³Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? [*continued...*]

²⁵ And which of you, by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁶ If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O *you* of little faith?

²⁹ “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. ³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

Sermon: “*The Man Who Had it All*”

Rev. Robert League

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Invitation to Stewardship

Offertory Prayer (*Unison*)

Holy One, all generous acts have their beginning in your generosity towards us. A generosity revealed above all in Jesus, the greatest gift of all. Such a gift invites us to generous giving also.

Receive our gifts, O God—this day and all days—for we offer them and our lives to be blessed and used in the doing of your Word: witnessing to Jesus’ love and serving others in his name. May what we give and what we do in Jesus’ name be true and worthy actions of our hearts, for it is in His name we pray. Amen.

Offertory Solo: “*Flight of the Monarch*”—Melody Bober

Erin Olakanmi, piano

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

[*If you have a joy or concern you wish to share, you may name it aloud—or call out the name of someone in need—during the pause in the prayer. The prayer concludes with 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.

BEARING GOD’S WORD INTO THE WORLD

* **Closing Hymn No. 434 (vv.1, 3-4):** “*Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*”

Today we are all called to be Disciples of the Lord,
To help to set the captives free, make plow-share out of sword,
To feed the hungry, quench their thirst, make love and peace our fast,
To serve the poor and homeless first, our ease and comfort last.

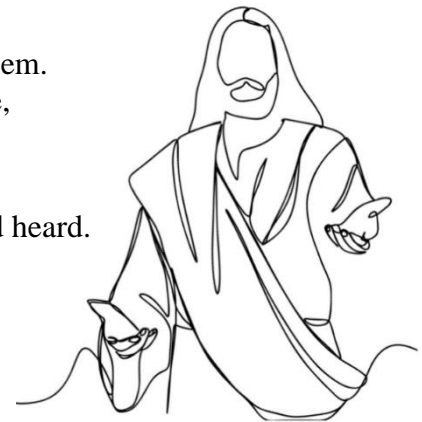
Pray justice may come rolling down as in a mighty stream,
With righteousness in field and town to cleanse us and redeem.
For God is longing to restore an earth where conflicts cease,
A world that was created for a harmony of peace.

May we in service to our God act out the living Word,
And walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord
To God who calls us all to be Disciples of the Lord.

Charge

Benediction

Postlude: “*Sinfonia from ‘Solomon’*”—G. F. Handel



LEADING WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Rev. Robert League, *Guest Preacher*

Heather MacPhail, *Organist/Director of Music Ministries*

Jason Dennison, *Videographer/Director of Technology*

Erin and Dayo Olakanmi, *Asst. Videographers*

Holly Scheper, *Lay Leader*

