FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Worship Service
The Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Prelude in F minor, from *Six Pieces for Organ* Frank Bridge

WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted from binarybreakingworship.com/tag/hagar/; written by Avery Arden)

Beloved community,
We come together as one
while holding different ideas, dreams, struggles, fears.
We come together as one
as outcasts, *and* as those who cast out others.
We come together as one
gathered by the One who befriended the oppressed *and* the oppressor.
Let us worship God.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN #276
Great Is Thy Faithfulness FAITHFULNESS

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
(Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, 'Hold Fast to What Is Good'. Used with permission.)

Holy God, we open our hearts to you this day and offer the truth of our lives: The fear that stifles us, the prejudice that blinds us, the ignorance that hobbles us, the doubt that plagues us. Help us, we pray, that we will Find courage in unlikely place, see the world with new and gracious eyes, move to those places where love is needed, have faith that you are with us. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Please stand if you are able.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the Good News: we are forgiven! We are set free to go out into the world and be the loving, gracious, hopeful people of God! **Alleluia! Amen.**

WE LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE — Barbara Hjorth

Psalm 46:1-7

Hebrew Scriptures: Genesis 21:9-21

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON — Rev. Karen Kinney

"El Roi: Seeing God, Being Known, and Loving Like Him"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

When have you witnessed God coming to the Hagars in our midst? When has your community behaved like Abraham & Sarah, hoarding God's love as if there were not blessing enough to go around?

*SERMON HYMN — #282

If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee — WER NUR DEN LIEBEN

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(Adapted from binarybreakingworship.com/tag/hagar/; written by Avery Arden)

We believe in the God of Sarah and Abraham who does not let injustice go unchecked, but who also does not abandon us in our sin. We believe in the God of Hagar and Ishmael who sees the outcast, who hears the cry of the oppressed, and responds with compassion and blessing. We believe that God is God for oppressor and oppressed alike, that Her justice rolls down like mighty waters, even while her mercies are renewed every morning. We believe God holds us accountable for our sins, individual and communal, and shows us a way out of the prisons we build around ourselves and others. God of Hagar, God of Sarah, See us. Hear us. Liberate us from our own sin, and from the harm inflicted on us and the harm we too often inflict on others. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

MINUTE FOR MISSION AND OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory With a Voice of Singing — Martin Shaw

*Doxology — #592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow — OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*SENDING HYMN — #339

Be Thou My Vision — SLANE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Grang Choeur No. 2 — Alfred Hollins

You're welcome to stay and enjoy the Postlude or to depart while the music is played.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!