

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church
August 16, 2026
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost



WORSHIP + SHARE + GROW + SERVE



WELCOME, Visitors and Guests!
We pray for God's blessing for us all
as we worship together today.
Please silence your cell phones
and pass the peace of Christ.

†Please rise in body or spirit.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.

People: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Leader: Let the nations be glad and sing for you, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon the earth. People: Let the people's praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere Him.

†OPENING SONG "He Reigns On High"

Praise the Lord, worship His majesty He reigns on high.

Praise the Lord, worship His majesty He reigns on high.

One thing have I desired O Lord.

That I may dwell in Your house forever,

that I may always see Your beauty,

and know the Fullness of Your power. (repeat)

Praise the Lord, worship His majesty He reigns on high.

Praise the Lord, worship His majesty He reigns on high.

Praise the Lord!

By – Steve Young

WE COME BEFORE GOD TO CONFESS

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

The apostle Paul says that we are “imprisoned in disobedience”, but that God is merciful to all. We live amid the tension of knowing that the Lord is quick to forgive and recognizing that we need to be forgiven. We also live amid the tension of knowing that, through Christ, all things are being made new and recognizing that our broken world needs to be transformed. From the discomfit of this tension, let us offer a prayer of confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Merciful God, your world cries out. The fruits of our disobedience are harming your creation. You tasked us to be good stewards of your creation, and we have fallen short. You challenged us to love God and love our neighbor, and we have failed to show that love. You promised to bring all people joyfully together in a house of prayer on your holy mountain. We find ways to stay apart. Bring us together, O Lord. Empower us with a spirit of love for you and love for all our neighbors. Help us live lives of services to you so that all your children will know your peace. Forgive us when we fall short and continue to transform your world, leading us to your promised kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Paul writes: “I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable”. God has shown us mercy and God will be merciful to all. Hear the good news: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

RESPONSE

“Holy Spirit, breathe on me”

Holy Spirit, let me see,
all the things you are,
all the things you want me to be,
Holy Spirit breathe on me.

By Jeff Nelson and Eddie Smith.

WE RECEIVE GOD’S WORD

MESSAGE FOR YOUTH

How to Jump Rope

Dr. Gayle W. Griffin

NEWS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Lay Reader

This Week at Willow Grove

- *We have left over ice cream from the concert on the lawn. Please come down to Ryno Hall after the service and enjoy a bowl of ice cream!!*
- *Join us for our weekly prayer meeting! The Zoom link is available on the church website.*

Wednesdays at 7:30 pm: Led by Judy and Paul.

Let’s come together in prayer and seek the presence of God as we lift up our hearts and intercede for one another. Everyone is welcome!

What’s Ahead at Willow Grove

- *If anyone has pastoral care needs during Rev. Park’s August vacation, please speak with Judy Murphy, congregational life Elder.*

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

“Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come and my deliverance be revealed.” So, we pray God is every time, place, and space. May your Spirit move among us so that the words we hear and the words we speak will be to your glory, and will lead towards justice, and will reveal to us your salvation and deliverance. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 16:13-20

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON Loosing and Binding: Freedom in Jesus Christ

Dr. Gayle W. Griffin

†**SONG OF RESPONSE** Hymn no.361 - How Firm a Foundation

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you

All: 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

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

OFFERING

[Now let us bring our gifts to God through our offering.

Please stand or sit as the Spirit leads and join us as we sing our song of thanks.]

†**RESPONSE**

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One

Give thanks, because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son. *Repeat*

And now, let the weak say I am strong,

Let the poor say I am rich

Because of what the Lord has done for us. *Repeat*

Give thanks.

Words and Music: Henry

Smith

†SONG OF DEPARTURE

O LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO

B F# E B B/A# G#m F#/A# B



O Love that will not let me go, I rest my wea - ry
 O Light that fol - low'st all my way, I yield my flick - 'ring
 O Joy that seek - est me through pain, I can - not close my
 O Cross that lift - est up my head, I dare not ask to

5 E F# B F# E B B/A#



soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that
 torch to thee; my heart re - stores its bor - rowed ray, that
 heart to thee; I trace the rain - bow through the rain, and
 fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glo - ry dead, and

8 G#m F#/A# B E F# C#m G#m F# F#/E F#/D# F#



in thine o - cean depths its flow may rich - er full - er be.
 in thy sun - shine's blaze its day may bright - er fair - er be.
 feel the prom - ise is not vain, that morn shall tear-less be.
 from the ground there blos - soms red life that shall end-less be.

—Words: George Matheson; Music: Christopher Miner

BENEDICTION

THE DISMISSAL

Leader: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

Prayers

Each week as we pray together, we pray for people whose names and stories we may not know. Yet we faithfully pray for them as we know God is aware of each and every need.

*Grateful prayers for the continued healing of
Mital, Ed, and Frank*

*Healing prayers for
Andy, August, Sandra, Irany, Olivia, Ed, Sue,
Gisela and Bonnie*

Guest Preacher

Dr. Gayle Griffin

Today's Worship Assistants

Linda DiDario – Lay Reader

August Ruggiero – Greeter

We thank all our volunteers who make our service welcoming.

Paul DiDario – Director of Music and Pianist

Rebecca Pacella – Song Leader

Doris Dias – Secretary

Office hours Mon-Thu 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Paul Whitehurst – Custodian

Rev. Se Hyuk Park – Pastor

Rev Park's regular office hours are:

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wed. and 12-3 p.m. on Thu.

Appointments during this time or at another time can be scheduled by emailing him at pastor@willowgrovechurch.org or contacting the church office

Gayle Griffin, Ph.D.

Gayle W. Griffin has been a member of Roseville Presbyterian Church, Newark, New Jersey, for more than 22 years, and is an Elder there. Prior to moving to New Jersey, she was a member of Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA, for 19 years. There, she was a Deacon for 7 years, including 5 years as Moderator of the Deacon Board, and 10 years as an Elder. She worked in several ministries in Grace Church. She also served as secretary of the church's non-profit foundation, Schenley Heights Community Development Corporation. At Roseville, she teaches the adult women's Sunday School Class and chairs the Worship and Music Committee, is an Elder, and serves on the Roseville Church non-profit foundation, Roseville Outreach Community Corporation. She has served on numerous church and presbytery committees and is currently serving on the Vision Board for the newly organized Presbytery of North East NJ.

In her professional life, Dr. Griffin is retired from her roles as Assistant Superintendent in Newark Public Schools and the East Orange School District. She served on the *Newark Public Library* Board of Trustees for 14 years. She has been an Executive School Performance Coach and served as Executive Director of the NJ Department of Education's Regional Achievement Center in Essex and Hudson County. She is currently a faculty member at Seton Hall University's Urban School Transformation, serving as an educational consultant in school districts in New Jersey.

Dr. Griffin is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at age 17 to attend college. She graduated from Chatham College, where she received her B.A. degree, and the University of Pittsburgh, where she received her M.Ed. and Ph.D. In Pittsburgh, she was a teacher and principal. She met and married her husband, who was a native of western Pennsylvania. She is a widow and the mother of one daughter, Dr. Flo Jaune Griffin-Cofer, an epidemiologist, who lives in Sacramento, CA.

More importantly, though, she is a born-again Christian. Mrs. Griffin believes, "A woman makes her plans, but the Lord orders her steps." Through prayer, this proverb has guided her daily actions.

Willow Grove Mission Statement

Reflecting God's love, we love and serve all neighbors

We'd Love to Connect

Thanks for worshipping with us today! Scan the QR code to complete our Connection Card so we can get to know you, share what's happening at the church, and support you however we can.





Willow Tree CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Does your child love to sing?

Where Young Voices Grow.



Children entering **GRADES 2-5**



No audition required



Open to all families



Weekly rehearsals
begin **Sept. 17**



A joyful, inclusive community

REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN!

Inaugural Season
begins **Sept. 17**

A joyful place where children **discover** their singing voice,
make new friends, **build** confidence, and **experience**
the joy of making music together!

Register Today!

willowtreechildrenschorus.com



Participation is offered
at **no cost to families**,
thanks to the generous support
of Willow Grove
Presbyterian Church.

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Willow Grove
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Willow Grove Presbyterian Church holds CCLI license #3219335
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Cover Design by Frank Thorne