

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church
August 9, 2026
Eleventh 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: Upon Mount Horeb, Elijah heard the voice of God, not in the wind or the earthquake or the fire, but in the sound of sheer silence.

People: Holy God, quiet our minds and our hearts, free us of distraction, so we can hear and know You among us.

†**OPENING SONG** "I Love You, Lord"

I love you Lord, and I lift my voice
To worship you O my soul rejoice
Take joy my King, in what you hear:
May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

WE COME BEFORE GOD TO CONFESS

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

We return to God through confession. Let us honestly acknowledge how we have gone astray and confess our sins to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: God our refuge, you hear our cries for mercy. You know our exhaustion, our cynicism, and our sense of defeat. You lift the lowly and offer hope to the hopeless. But we are quick to lose perspective and exaggerate critique. We confess the ways we are tempted to give up on the path of righteousness. We pray for your forgiveness. Amen

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. In the name of 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 Keys to the Kingdom

NEWS FOR OUR COMMUNITY Lay Reader

This Week at Willow Grove

- *Join us in Ryno Hall immediately following worship for food and fellowship*
- *There will be an informal calendar meeting for the Willow Grove congregation after the worship service during the potluck dinner.*
- *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

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. Open us to your life-giving Word. Quiet the voices within us that do not align with your will. Focus our minds on the message you intend for us so we may faithfully discern your way. Amen

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 16:13-20

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Keys to the Kingdom

Dr. Gayle W. Griffin

†**SONG OF RESPONSE** "O, How I Love Jesus"

Please see page 5 for words and music

O, How I Love Jesus

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He that loveth not knoweth not God; for He is love. — 1 John 4:8

O, HOW I LOVE JESUS

American Melody

Descant by Ralph H. Good Pasteur

Frederick Whitfield

1 There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
 2 It tells me of a Sav - ior's love, Who died to set me free;
 3 It tells of One whose lov - ing heart Can feel my deep - est woe,

Descant: To

1 It sounds like mu - sic in my ear, The sweet - est name on earth.
 2 It tells me of His pre - cious blood, The sin - ner's per - fect plea.
 3 Who in each sor - row bears a part That none can bear be - low.

me, it's won - der - ful, To me, it's won - der - ful! To
 O, how I love Je - sus, O, how I love Je - sus,

me, it's won - der - ful To know that Je - sus is mine!
 O, how I love Je - sus - Be - cause He first loved me!

TESTIMONY, WITNESS AND EVANGELISM

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 "All I Have is Christ"

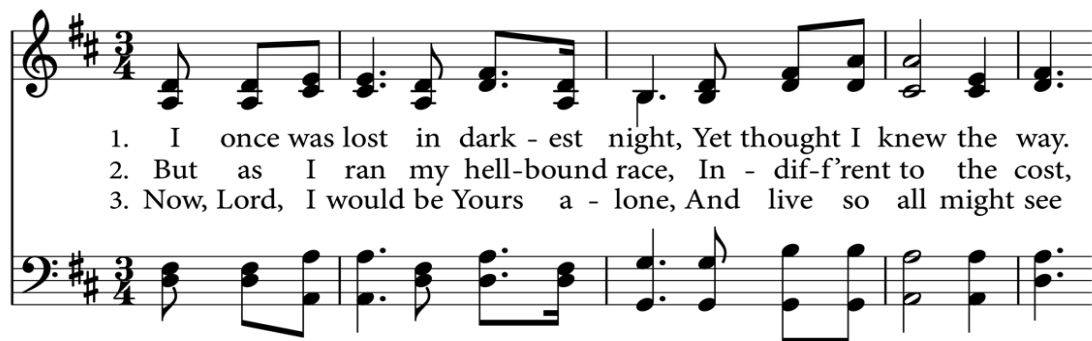
BENEDICTION

THE DISMISSAL

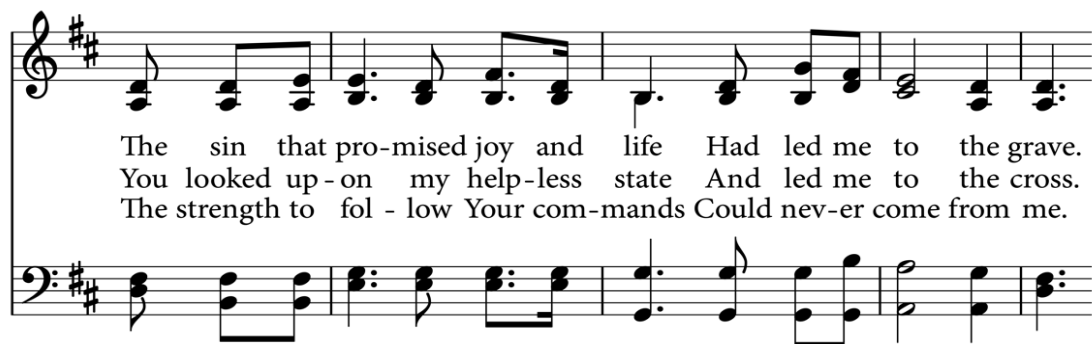
Leader: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

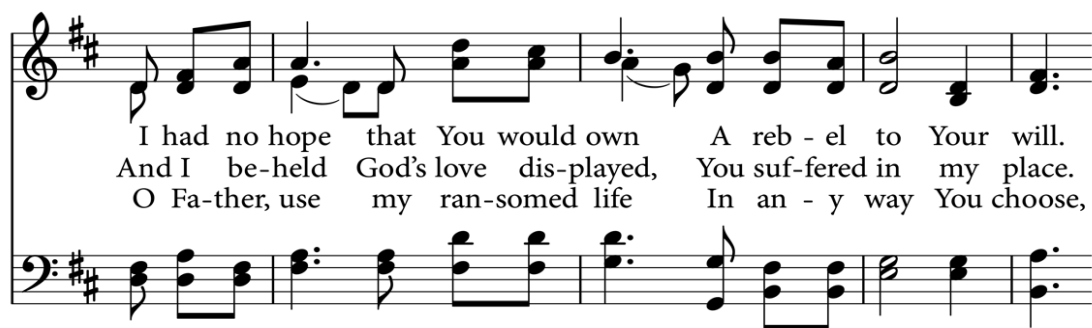
ALL I HAVE IS CHRIST



1. I once was lost in dark - est night, Yet thought I knew the way.
 2. But as I ran my hell-bound race, In - dif-f'rent to the cost,
 3. Now, Lord, I would be Yours a - lone, And live so all might see



The sin that pro-mised joy and life Had led me to the grave.
 You looked up - on my help-less state And led me to the cross.
 The strength to fol - low Your com-mands Could nev-er come from me.



I had no hope that You would own A reb - el to Your will.
 And I be-held God's love dis-played, You suf-ered in my place.
 O Fa-ther, use my ran-somed life In an - y way You choose,



And if You had not loved me first, I would re-fuse You still.
 You bore the wrath re-served for me, Now all I know is
 And let my song for - ev - er be, "My on - ly boast is

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
Bill Buchanan – Lay Reader
Edwin Velez – 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.



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Willow Grove
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Church

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church in Scotch Plains, NJ,
is committed to nurturing young musicians and
creating opportunities for children to grow through
music, friendship, and community.



Willow Grove Mission Statement

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

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church
1961 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains NJ 07076
908-232-5678 office@willowgrovechurch.org
willowgrovechurch.org

Willow Grove Presbyterian Church holds CCLI license #3219335
Willow Grove Presbyterian Church holds One License Permission #A-000000

Cover Design by Frank Thorne

We'd Love to Connect

Thanks for worshiping 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.

