

Sunday Worship - January 17, 2021



God is Holding Your Life: Where Can I Go?

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa
*“Striving to live as Jesus lived—
confronting injustice with love, compassion, service.”*

Welcome to Worship

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

INTRODUCING OUR DAY'S THEME

SERIES SONG "God is Holding Your Life" by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

*Turn now your gaze upon the earth
Where is the One who never sleeps?
We call the One who guards you now,
Your spirit safe in holy keep.*

*God is holding your life
God is holding your life
God is holding your life, we believe
[repeat refrain]*

OPENING COLLECT PRAYER

L: Dear and Near God,
you never leave our side.

Open us this day to feeling and knowing your presence deep in our hearts
so that we might show forth love with the same confidence,
offering your reign of right relationship on earth as it is in heaven.

**P: We praise you for your close attention,
holding our lives together in care. Amen.**

***HYMN** #308 O God in Whom All Life Begins

*1. O God in whom all life begins,
who births the seed to fruit,
bestow your blessing on our lives;
here let your love find root.
Bring forth in us the Spirit's gift
of patience, joy, and peace;
deliver us from numbing fear,
and grant our faith increase.*

*2. Unite in mutual ministry
our minds and hands and hearts
that we may have the grace to seek
the power your peace imparts.
So let our varied gifts combine*

*to glorify your Name
that in all things by word and deed
we may your love proclaim.*

*3. Through tears and laughter, grief and joy,
enlarge our trust and care;
so bind us in community
that we may risk and dare.
Be with us when we gather here
to worship, sing, and pray;
then send us forth in power and faith
to live the words we say.*

***PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION**

L: Let us make our confession together:

**All: Merciful God,
in your gracious presence
we confess our sin and the sin of this world.
Although Christ is among us as our peace,
we are a people divided against ourselves
as we cling to the values of a broken world.
The profit and pleasures we pursue
lay waste the land and pollute the seas.
The fears and jealousies that we harbor
set neighbor against neighbor
and nation against nation.**

**We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom,
of intellect and reason,
and have turned them into bonds of oppression.**

**Lord, have mercy upon us;
heal and forgive us.
Set us free to serve you in the world
as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ.**

Time of Silence

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: Take comfort in the assurance
that even those things that are hidden from memory,
or are too deep for our words,
are not beyond God's forgiving love.
God, who knows us completely,
bestows pardon and peace.
**All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Amen!**

***REPOSE** #814 In God Alone

*In God alone my soul can find rest and peace,
in God my peace and joy.
Only in God my soul can find its rest,
find its rest and peace.*

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

L: The peace of Christ that passes understanding be with you.
P: And also with you.

“SELAH” MOMENT

DISCOVERY TIME

SCRIPTURE

L: In the beginning was the Word.

P: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

L: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Psalms 139:1-18, NRSV

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.
Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night,"
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.
For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end—I am still with you.

L: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

P: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION ON THE WORD Where Can I Go?

HYMN #183 Come to Me, O Weary Traveler

*“Come to me, O weary traveler; come to me with your distress;
come to me, you heavy burdened; come to me and find your rest.”*

*“Do not fear, my yoke is easy; do not fear, my burden’s light;
do not fear the path before you; do not run from me in fright.”*

*“Take my yoke and leave your troubles; take my yoke and come with me.
Take my yoke, I am beside you; take and learn humility.”*

*“Rest in me, O weary traveler; rest in me and do not fear.
Rest in me, my heart I gentle; rest and cast away your care.”*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Let us pray for the leaders of this world and this church community...

God of Justice, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in conflict around the world...

Prince of Peace, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for all who are experiencing loss of any kind in this pandemic...

Comforting Healer, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who are homeless, hungry and alone...

Emmanuel, God-With-Us, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in comfort,
for Christ-like hospitality and generosity...

Transforming Spirit, hear our prayer.

Holy and Living One,
for those we have named and the ones whose names we do not know,
hear our 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.**

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

L: The psalmist reminds us, “The earth is Lord’s and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it.” (Psalm 24:1)

With thankfulness we give in gratitude and joy.

With prayerfulness we give in sacrifice and love.

With hopefulness we give in commitment to God.

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY #606

*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

L: Let us pray our thanks together:

**All: Lord, you give us everything that is good—
our homes, our food, our families, and even our lives.
All that we own and all that we are belong to you.
Since you give us so much,
we thank you by sharing our time, talents,
and right now our money with others in need.
Use these gifts to show your love to people
throughout our world in the way of Jesus. Amen.**

*HYMN #22 God of the Sparrow

*1. God of the sparrow
God of the whale
God of the swirling stars
How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise*

*2. God of the earthquake
God of the storm
God of the trumpet blast
How does the creature cry Woe
How does the creature cry Save*

*3. God of the rainbow
God of the cross
God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks*

*4. God of the hungry
God of the sick
God of the prodigal
How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life*

*5. God of the neighbor
God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace*

*6. God of the ages
God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home*

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE