

Sunday Worship- February 28, 2021



Again & Again: We Are Called to Listen

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.

KINESTHETIC CALL TO WORSHIP

~Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

HYMN #410 God Is Calling through the Whisper

*God is calling through the whisper of the Spirit's deepest sighs,
through the thrill of sudden beauties that can catch us by surprise.
Flash of lightning, crash of thunder; hush of stillness, rush of wonder:
God is calling – can you hear? God is calling – can you hear?*

*God is calling through the voices of our neighbors' urgent prayers,
through their longing for redemption and for rescue from despair.
Place of hurt or face of needing; strident cry or silent pleading:
God is calling – can you hear? God is calling – can you hear?*

*God is calling through the music of sublime and human arts,
through the hymns of earth and angels, and the carols of our hearts.
Lift of joy and gift of singing; days and nights our praises bringing:
God is calling – and we hear! God is calling – and we hear!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Often the first step to change is listening.

We have to listen to those we've hurt.

We have to listen to creation as she cries.

We have to listen to the voice of the oppressed,

If we ever hope to make things right.

So today as we begin our prayer of confession,

We will start with a moment of silence—

A moment to listen.

And then we will pray together trusting that God is always listening to us,

And that God's ears listen with love.

So let us confess, silently and then together...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Pause for silent confession

L: Listening God,

All: Take what is closed in us and open it.

Take what is distracted in us and settle it.

Take what is hurting in us and hold it.

Take any and all parts of us that create distance from you.

For we are like Peter, O God.

**We argue what we don't know. We fear what we cannot see.
And we almost always speak sooner than we listen.
So open us, settle us, hold us, and forgive us.
We long to hear you more clearly.
We long to know you more fully.
With hope we pray,
And with gratitude we confess.**

Time of Silence

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: Amen.

Siblings in Christ,

We confess with gratitude because we know
that God already has heard and forgiven us.

No matter what we have done or left undone, we are held in God's hand.

So rest in this good news:

All: God invites us in. God meets us where we are.

God hears our prayers. God forgives us.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

~Call, Confession & Assurance by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

***RESPONSE** #814 In God Alone (sing three times)

*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.

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.

Mark 8:31-9:8 (Common English Bible) – Jesus' Predicts His Death

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: "The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead." He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: "Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts."

After calling the crowd together with his disciples, Jesus said to them, “All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them. Why would people gain the whole world but lose their lives? What will people give in exchange for their lives? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Human One will be ashamed of that person when he comes in the Father’s glory with the holy angels.” Jesus continued, “I assure you that some standing here won’t die before they see God’s kingdom arrive in power.”

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain where they were alone. He was transformed in front of them, and his clothes were amazingly bright, brighter than if they had been bleached white. Elijah and Moses appeared and were talking with Jesus. Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, “Rabbi, it’s good that we’re here. Let’s make three shrines—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He said this because he didn’t know how to respond, for the three of them were terrified.

Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice spoke from the cloud, “This is my Son, whom I dearly love. Listen to him!” Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

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 Again & Again: We Are Called to Listen

HYMN There is a Time for Silence (Tune #216 Beneath the Cross of Jesus)

There is a time for silence, a time to listen well, a time to hear the painful stories others have to tell. O God, may we who love to talk now hear the rage and fear, and may we learn from neighbors who have long been silenced here.

There is a time for asking, a time to pause and pray, there is a time to hear the prophets speak of God's new day, to hear the words of Jesus who taught welcome, truth and love, to hear the Spirit speaking through the ones who shout, "Enough!"

There's time for humble study — for reading and for thought. God, may we learn from others of the justice they have sought, And may we learn from those who bravely stand against the hate, So when we're called to justice, we, your church, won't hesitate.

There's time for good reflection, to ponder who we've been, to think how our own attitudes have paved the way for sin, to listen to the ones we fear — to folks we may resent — to hear of Jesus' call to love — and humbly to repent.

And there's a time to work now — to boldly say their names, to protest and to organize, to advocate for change, to use our voices and to stand with those who are oppressed. As we seek justice, hand in hand, Lord, may your world be blessed.

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SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS AND 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.

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

L: As we come before God with our tithes and offerings,
let us remember the words of Micah 6:
What does the Lord require of us?
To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.
Thus we bring our money, gifts, and whole lives as an offering to our God.

OFFERTORY Selections from Ola Gjeilo's *Night*

DOXOLOGY #70 What Does the Lord Require of You?

*What does the Lord require of you?
What does the Lord require of you?
Justice, kindness, walk humbly with your God.
To seek justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

L: Let us pray our thanks together:

ALL: Great God, you are the giver of life and all that is good.

Accept our humble gifts and multiply them.

Accept our humble hearts and mold them.

**Accept our humble lives and transform them, that we might live
in the power of the resurrection, willing to risk all for your kingdom.**

In the name of Jesus we offer these gifts, and in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

~Words for Worship 2 by Diane Zaerr Brenneman, #152

*HYMN #339 Lift Every Voice and Sing

*1: Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise
high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has
taught us.
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has
brought us.
Facing the rising sun
of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.*

*2: Stony the road we trod,
bitter the chast'ning rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat,
have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our people sighed?*

*We have come over a way that with tears has been
watered.
We have come, treading our path thro' the blood of
the slaughtered,
out from the gloomy past,
till now we stand at last
where the bright gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*3: God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,
thou who hast by thy might
led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where
we met thee;
lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we
forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand,
may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.*

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE