

## Sunday Worship- September 19, 2021



*Some People Following Jesus* by Gary Bunt

### **Follow Jesus: Follow Jesus in Community**

**First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa**

*“Striving to live as Jesus lived –  
confronting injustice with love, compassion, service.”*

## Welcome to Worship

### PRELUDE AND RINGING OF THE HOUR

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

L: The Lord be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: When I think of God's presence in the world, I am grateful:

**P: Grateful for the presence of hope;  
grateful for the gift of life.**

L: And when I think of God's presence in my life, I am humbled:

**P: Humbled by the gift of grace;  
humbled by the invitation to begin again.**

L: And when I think of God's presence in this community, I am glad:

**P: Glad to be surrounded by holy people  
worshipping our Holy God.**

**ALL: Thank you all; thank you, God.**

—Beth Merrill Neel, [www.holdfasttowhatisgood.com](http://www.holdfasttowhatisgood.com)

#### Response

#### \*CALL TO CONFESSION

L: Holy God, Creator of all that is, Donor of Grace,  
and Giver of Life: hear our prayer.

#### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Holy God, there are chasms in our lives,  
deep valleys that separate us  
from one another and from You.**

**We confess that we have allowed those rifts to grow,  
for fear of admitting our part in the separation,  
for fear of being rejected when we reach out.**

**You call us to a reconciled life,  
to healed relationships,  
to a wholeness with each other  
and with You.**

**Mend us, we pray, and make us new creations  
through the power and love of Christ,  
in whose name we pray. Amen.**

— Beth Merrill Neel, [www.holdfasttowhatisgood.com](http://www.holdfasttowhatisgood.com)

#### Time of silence

## \*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

L: The good news in Christ  
is that when we face ourselves and God  
with the awareness of our need,  
we are given grace to grow, and courage to continue the journey.  
Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

**P: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

\*RESPONSE #729 Lord, I Want to Be a Christian (verse 4)

*Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart;  
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.  
In my heart, in my heart,  
Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.*

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

## DISCOVERY TIME

### SCRIPTURE READING

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.

John 15:1-11 (Common English Bible)

*Reader 1:* “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. He removes any of my branches that don’t produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

*Reader 2:* A branch can’t produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can’t produce fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything.

*Reader 1:* If you don’t remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples.

*Reader 2:* “As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy will be in you and your joy will be complete.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (Common English Bible)

*Reader 1:* He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. His purpose was to equip God's people for the work of serving and building up the body of Christ until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God's Son. God's goal is for us to become mature adults—to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ.

*Reader 2:* As a result, we aren't supposed to be infants any longer who can be tossed and blown around by every wind that comes from teaching with deceitful scheming and the tricks people play to deliberately mislead others. Instead, by speaking the truth with love, let's grow in every way into Christ, who is the head.

***Congregation:* The whole body grows from him, as it is joined and held together by all the supporting ligaments. The body makes itself grow in that it builds itself up with love as each one does its part.**

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.**

SERMON

*Follow Jesus: Follow Jesus in Community*

HYMN

#767 Together We Serve

*1: Together we serve,  
united by love,  
inviting God's world to the glorious feast.  
We work and we pray  
through sorrow and joy,  
extending your love to the last and the least.*

*2: We seek to become  
a beacon of hope,  
a lamp for the heart and a light for the feet.  
We learn, year by year,  
to let love shine through  
until we see Christ in each person we meet.*

*3: We welcome the scarred,  
the wealthy, the poor,  
the busy, the lonely, and all who need care.  
We offer a home  
to those who will come,  
our hands quick to help, our hearts ready to  
dare.*

*4: Together, by grace,  
we witness and work,  
remembering Jesus, in whom we grow  
strong.  
Together we serve  
in Spirit and truth,  
remembering love is the strength of our  
song.*

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS & 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: Jesus is our peace.

Jesus' way guides who we are, what we do,  
and the ways we give of ourselves.

May our tithes and offerings be given  
in joyful response to God's love.

~Diane Zaerr Brenneman, *Words for Worship 2*, #142

## GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

### OFFERTORY

\*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING #70 What Does the Lord Require of You?

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**We offer ourselves with our gifts, Giver and Sustainer of Life, confident that you have a purpose for them and for us.**

**Expand our limited vision to embrace new possibilities.**

**We rededicate ourselves to you with our giving.**

**May our offerings reach beyond the barriers  
of our former thinking and doing.**

**In the Spirit of Christ, we would pray and live.**

**Amen.**

\*HYMN #727 Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

*1: Will you let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you?  
Pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant, too.*

*2: We are pilgrims on a journey,  
we are trav'lers on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.*

*3: I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the nighttime of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.*

*4: I will weep when you are weeping;  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
till we've seen this journey through.*

*5: Will you let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you?  
Pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant, too.*

\*SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY BLESSING & BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

## Prayer Requests:

- \*Angie and Bernie Paulson's daughter, Rozie, began STEM cell treatment at UIHC on Friday, September 17. She will be in the hospital in isolation for four weeks.
- \*Ann Cannon, making emergency trip to Germany to help transition her mother, Barbara, and stepfather, Rudolf, to assisted living. Both have deteriorating health.
- \*Dixie Mackie continued health problems, including progression of COPD and emphysema; more treatments and prescriptions added.
- \*Carol & Denver Dillard's granddaughter in Nashville, Fei Er (Shuai), went home from the hospital after recovering from major heart surgery to reroute her heart on August 24
- \*Marty Gordon, Don Burch's son-in-law, recovering from August 31 surgery to remove cancerous lymph nodes in his neck and a carotid body tumor on his right side (unrelated to the cancer). He'll receive six weeks of radiation, and chemo only if necessary.
- \*Jim Winn, at the VA hospital, waiting to be moved to assisted living or skilled nursing.
- \*Dick Hogan is steadily improving after knee replacement and subsequent infection.
- \*Penny Gerber's brother, Kenn, whose cancer has come back a third time, receiving immunotherapy.
- \*Anita Pitcher is weak, in a great deal of pain and has multiple health problems.
- \*Jennifer Lengwin's parents, John & Ruth Fenchel, in Seattle; mom has Alzheimer's and dad is caregiving
- \*Carole Frazee, ongoing recovery from back surgery and pain management

*If you have a prayer request to add to the list, please contact Pastor Lori at [lori.wunder@firstpresmv.com](mailto:lori.wunder@firstpresmv.com)*