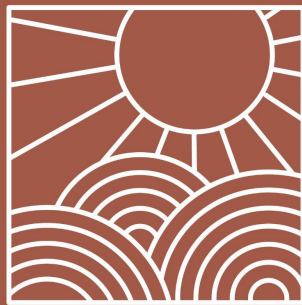


Sunday Worship - November 20, 2022



I WILL FULFILL TO YOU MY
PROMISE AND BRING YOU
BACK TO THIS PLACE.
FOR SURELY I KNOW THE
PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,
SAYS GOD, PLANS FOR
YOUR WELFARE AND NOT
FOR HARM, TO GIVE YOU
A FUTURE WITH HOPE.

+ JEREMIAH 29:10-11

Narrative Lectionary Year 1 Week 11

God's Plan for Peace - A Future with Hope

*"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." Isaiah 2:3*

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.

INTROIT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: What do we hear about ourselves? What do we hear about this community?

What do we hear about the Church? What do we hear about God?

P: What happens when the rumor mill shakes our foundations?

L: We come to the one who is sure and steady, offering hope and acceptance.

P: We come to the one who has heard all the idle talk and still finds room for us.

L: We come into the embrace of the one whose love is assured.

All: We come to God, in worship.

***HYMN** #401 Here in This Place (Gather Us In)

*1. Here in this place, new light is streaming,
now is the darkness, vanished away,
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.*

*2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery;
we are the old, who yearn for your face,
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.*

*3. Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat, the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.*

*4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven light years away,
but here in this space, the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, now is the day.
Gather us in, and hold us forever;
gather us in, and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.*

***PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION**

L: O God, we come before you this day to praise you and adore you.

We come before you in your house as your people to learn and grow from your Word.

**P: We thank you for the gift of languages: the languages that shape our culture,
the languages that express our feelings, the languages that craft words into works of art.**

But our words are not always used for good.

Pause

L: When our words have formed rumors, rumors that damage people, strain relationships and hinder progress, forgive us.

P: When gossip has turned words into weapons, when rumors have brought pain, division and isolation, forgive us.

L: May we not let any unwholesome talk come out of our mouths, rather may we say and do what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

P: Challenge us to build up and not to tear down. Inspire us to change the rumors that have plagued our pasts. But above all, Lord, may we bring the focus of our words and deeds back to where they belong, in service to you, to your glory, to the furthering of your Kingdom. So be it. Amen.

Time of silent prayer

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

L: Hear this good news! In Christ, God comes near to us, bringing hope, joy and forgiveness into our lives.

P: God gathers up the fragments of our lives and shapes us into new people. For this reason, we lift our thanks to God. Amen.

*RESPONSE #750 Goodness Is Stronger than Evil

*Goodness is stronger than evil;
love is stronger than hate;
light is stronger than darkness;
life is stronger than death.*

*Victory is ours; victory is ours
through God who loves us. (repeat)*

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

L: May mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.

The peace of Christ be with you.

P: And also with you.

DISCOVERY TIME - *Noisy Offering for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance*

ANTHEM

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Mark Hayes

Mark Anderson, Trumpet

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.

Isaiah 36:1-3, 13-20; 37:1-7; 2:1-4

Narrator (I): Assyria's King Sennacherib marched against all of Judah's fortified cities and captured them in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah. Assyria's king sent his field commander from Lachish, together with a large army, to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. He stood at the water channel of the Upper Pool, which is on the road to the field where clothes are washed. Hilkiyah's son Eliakim, who was the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and Asaph's son Joah the recorder went out to them.

Then the field commander stood up and shouted in Hebrew at the top of his voice:

Field Commander (2): “Listen to the message of the great king, Assyria’s king. The king says this: Don’t let Hezekiah lie to you. He won’t be able to rescue you. Don’t let Hezekiah persuade you to trust the Lord by saying, ‘The Lord will certainly rescue us. This city won’t be handed over to Assyria’s king.’

“Don’t listen to Hezekiah, because this is what Assyria’s king says: Surrender to me and come out. Then each of you will eat from your own vine and fig tree and drink water from your own well until I come to take you to a land just like your land. It will be a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards. Don’t let Hezekiah fool you by saying, ‘The Lord will rescue us.’ Did any of the other gods of the nations save their lands from the power of Assyria’s king? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Did they rescue Samaria from my power? Which one of the gods from those countries has rescued their land from my power? Will the Lord save Jerusalem from my power?”

...
Narrator (1): When King Hezekiah heard this, he ripped his clothes, covered himself with mourning clothes, and went to the Lord’s temple. He sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests to the prophet Isaiah, Amoz’s son. They were all wearing mourning clothes. They said to him,

King’s Advisors (2): “Hezekiah says this: Today is a day of distress, punishment, and humiliation. It’s as if children are ready to be born, but there’s no strength to see it through. Perhaps the Lord your God heard all the words of the field commander who was sent by his master, Assyria’s king. He insulted the living God! Perhaps he will punish him for the words that the Lord your God has heard. Offer up a prayer for those few people who still survive.”

Narrator (1): When King Hezekiah’s servants got to Isaiah, Isaiah said to them,

Isaiah (2): “Say this to your master: The Lord says this: Don’t be afraid at the words you heard, which the officers of Assyria’s king have used to insult me. I’m about to mislead him, so when he hears a rumor, he’ll go back to his own country. Then I’ll have him cut down by the sword in his own land.”

...
Narrator (1): This is what Isaiah, Amoz’s son, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

Isaiah (2): In the days to come
the mountain of the Lord’s house
will be the highest of the mountains.
It will be lifted above the hills;
peoples will stream to it.

***Congregation:* Many nations will go and say,
“Come, let’s go up to the Lord’s mountain,
to the house of Jacob’s God
so that he may teach us his ways
and we may walk in God’s paths.”**

Isaiah (2): Instruction will come from Zion;
the Lord’s word from Jerusalem.
God will judge between the nations,
and settle disputes of mighty nations.

**Congregation: Then they will beat their swords into iron plows
and their spears into pruning tools.**

**Nation will not take up sword against nation;
they will no longer learn how to make war.**

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

Rev. Lori Wunder

AFFIRMATION *based on a statement by Alan Boesak, South African pastor*

L: It is not true that humanity will forever hunger.

All: This is true: I am the bread of life and those who come to me will never hunger.

L: It is not true that peace has gone.

All: This is true: I give you my peace, a peace the world cannot give.

L: It is not true that the church is coming to an end.

All: This is true: Behold I make all things new beginning with you.

L: It is not true that prejudice will always win.

All: This is true: Love one another as I have loved you.

L: It is not true that worry and anxiety will follow us everywhere we go.

All: This is true: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me.

L: It is not true loneliness is the fate of humanity.

All: This is true: I am with you always to the end of time.

HYMN #837 What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

*1: What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*Refrain:
Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*2: O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]*

*3: What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]*

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: We belong to God. Everything we have, even life itself, is a gift from God.

In gratitude to God, we return a portion of these gifts in our daily living and giving..

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING #70 What Does the Lord Require

*PRAYER FOR STEWARDSHIP DEDICATION

by Rev. Dr. Syngman Rhee, Moderator of 212th General Assembly

L: All of life is a gift from God.

P: In life and in death I belong to God. Each day is a gift from God.

I must choose what to do with the gift that God gives me today.

L: As people of faith, our response is faithfulness.

P: For to whom much is given, much is required. We give gratitude for what God has and is doing in Jesus Christ. Christ sustains us and lives in the experiences we have.

L: To each of us God gives gifts.

P: The gifts are different, making for a wonderful variety, so that all may work together, using our gifts for the glory of God.

L: We respond with faithfulness.

P: Faithfulness demands our responsiveness and determines the way we live our lives.

We have responsibilities for the poor and disenfranchised. We have responsibilities for the care of the earth. We respond with faithfulness so that the world may see what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

L: Whatever we have is God's.

P: We have received freely from our Creator's Hand.

We are called to give freely, not simply of our money, but of ourselves.

L: All of life is a gift from God.

P: In life and death I belong to God. Each day is a gift from God.

I must choose what to do with the gift that God gives me today. Praise God for these gifts! Amen.

*HYMN #716 God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

*1: God, whose giving knows no ending,
from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom,
costly cross, grave's shattered door,
gifted by you, we turn to you,
offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever,
gracious donor of our days.*

*2: Skills and time are ours for pressing
toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
all at peace in health and freedom,
races joined, the Church made one.*

*Now direct our daily labor,
lest we strive for self alone;
born with talents, make us servants
fit to answer at your throne.*

*3: Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through powers your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred,
and to spread the Gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing,
as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming,
serving you by loving all.*

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE