

Sunday Worship - February 12, 2023



Photo by [Mae Mu](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The Parables of Jesus - Narrative Lectionary Week 21
The Gospel of Matthew: God's Power

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 (based on Psalm 95)

Leader: Come, let us sing a joyful song to God,
shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation.

**People: Let us enter God's presence with gratitude
and worship with heartfelt joy.**

Leader: The Lord is a great God,
greater than every idol.

**People: The depths of the earth are in God's care,
as are the highest mountains.**

Leader: The sea belongs to God
whose hands carved out the land.

**People: Let us draw near to God in worship and come before our maker,
for we are the flock whom God shepherds.**

~Wild Goose Resource Group, *A Wee Worship Book, Fifth Incarnation*. p. 34

*HYMN #35 Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

*1. Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
All ye who year, now to his temple draw near;
join me in glad adoration!*

*2. Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
granted in what he ordaineth?*

*3. Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again;
Gladly for aye we adore him.*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Knowing how hard it is to be honest about those parts of our lives that cause us the greatest pain, the greatest heartache, and the greatest shame, we trust that God welcomes us with open arms, unconditionally, and seeks to mend our hearts.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Let us pray:

Holy and gracious God, we confess:
we have failed to love you, our Maker,
hesitated to follow your Son,
and suspected the power of your Spirit.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: When we have desired comfort more than devotion,
satisfied our wants more than we have served your will,
worshipped a lesser god and gone for an easier gospel,

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: When we have privatized our wealth,
limited our company to those like us,
restricted our conversation to matters of no consequence,
and in all this compromised our integrity and lost faith in our faith,

All: Lord, have mercy.

Time of Silence

Leader: Forgive us, O God,

All: but not to ease our consciences until we feel penitent again.

Forgive us, so that we may have no defense against your will;

and then make us friends of your purpose

and worthy companions of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

~ Wild Goose Resource Group, *A Wee Worship Book, Fifth Incarnation*. pp. 32-33

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: O loving Christ, scatter the sin from our souls as the mist from the hills;
begin what we do, inform what we say, redeem who we are.

**P: In you we place our hope, our great hope, our living hope,
this day and evermore. Amen.**

~Wild Goose Worship Group

***RESPONSE** #596 You Are Holy

*You are holy, you are whole. You are always ever more
than we ever understand. You are always at hand.
Blessed are you coming near. Blessed are you coming here
to your church in wine and bread, raised from soil, raised from dead.
You are holy, you are wholeness; you are present.
Let the cosmos praise you, Lord!
Sing hosanna in the highest!
Sing hosanna! Sing hosanna to our God!*

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Leader: In Christ, we are a new creation.

The old is passed away, and we live as signs of reconciliation and love.

The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

ANTHEM

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.

Matthew 13:24-43 (NRSV) - Parables of Jesus

Reader 1: He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

Reader 2: He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”
He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

Reader 1: Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:
“I will open my mouth to speak in parables;
I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation.”

Reader 2: Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

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

HYMN #714 God of the Fertile Fields

*1. God of the fertile fields, shaper of earth that yields
our daily bread:
forth from your bounteous hand come gifts your love has planned that all in every land
be clothed and fed.*

*2. We would be stewards true, holding in trust from you
all that you give;
help us in love to share, teach us like you to care for people everywhere,
that all may live.*

*3. As grows the hidden seed to fruit that serves our need,
so your reign grows.
Let all our toil be used, no gift of yours abused, no humble task refused
your love bestows.*

*4. God of the countryside, dear to the Christ who dies
to make us one:
we pledge our lives anew in faithful love to you. Guide all we say and do.
Your will be done.*

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

Leader: There are many ways to offer ourselves, our resources, our lives to God and the way of God. We do so in response to God’s abundant love and provision.

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

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

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leader: Let us pray together:

**All: Lord, we bring before you the common things of our common life:
our money, our song,
our labors to be your faithful congregation,
our needs and dreams, our joys and sorrows,
our selves.**

**We celebrate all this with you,
seeking the touch of your Spirit so that we will share more deeply
what we are and have with all our brothers and sisters,
in our city and our world.**

In faith and gratitude we offer common things made miracles by your grace.

Amen.

~Words for Worship 1, #221, source unknown

SERVICE OF ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

*ordaining Jackee Austerman and Peter Rian as Ruling Elders,
and installing them together with Rita Swales to active service on the Session*

STATEMENT ON ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

PRAYER OF ORDINATION

DECLARATION AND WELCOME

*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 God's love to the last and the least.*

*2. We see 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.*

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE