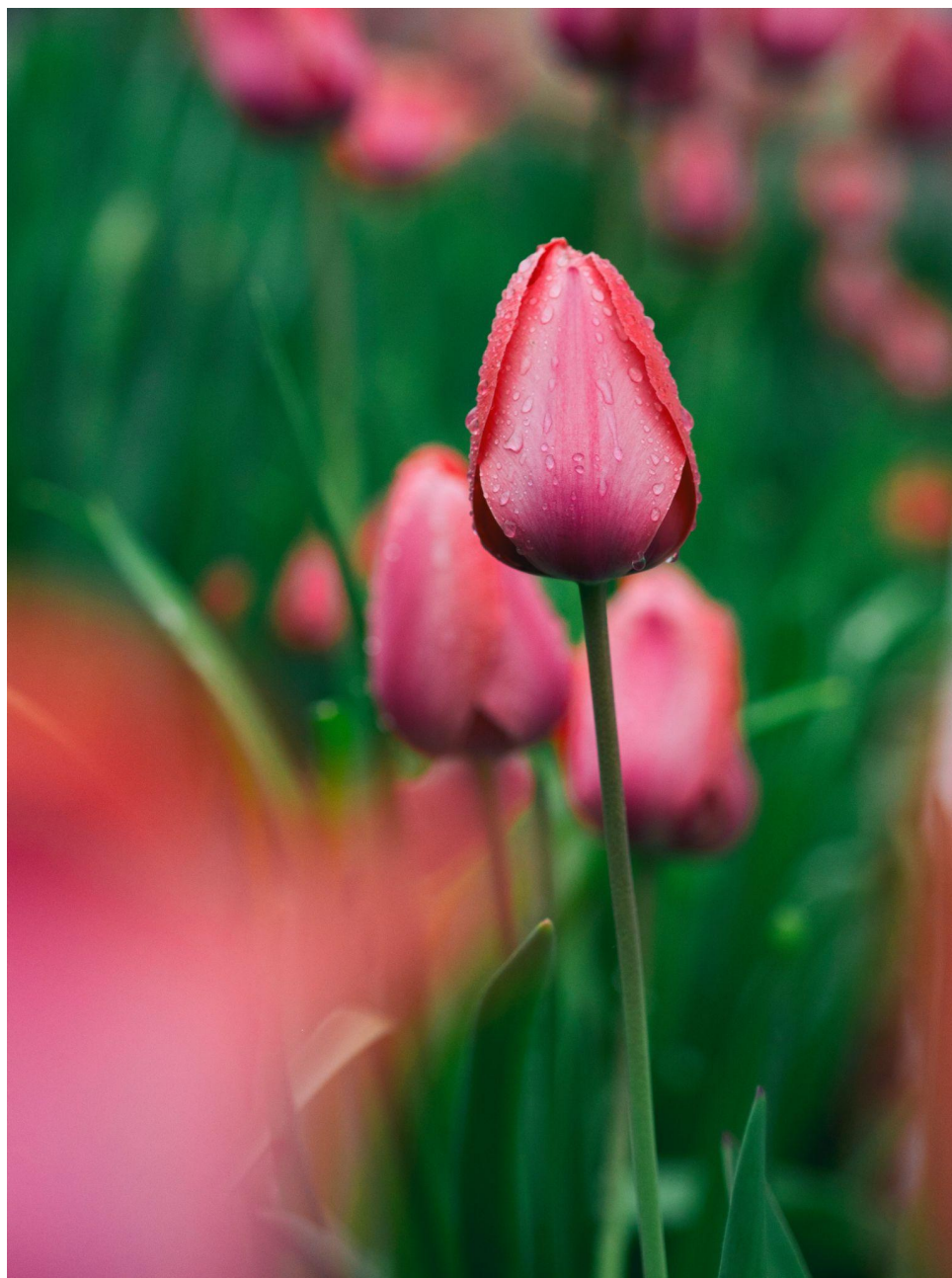


**Sunday Worship - April 30, 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday of Easter**



*Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash*

*Narrative Lectionary Week 31 - The Season of Easter*  
*The Acts of the Apostles: Paul and Barnabas*

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

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

# Welcome to Worship

*\*Please stand if you are able*

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE HOUR

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

L: The Lord be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

## INTROIT

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Lord of Life, we celebrate your countless gifts:

**P: of days and nights, rainbows and rain,  
of touch, dream and smile;**

L: of partners who love, kids who cuddle,  
grandparents who listen, friends who care;

**P: of dogs that lick, cats that purr,  
hands that create, food on the table.**

L: Yet above all, we celebrate the gift of your coming among us:

**P: walking our roads, calling our names,  
enfolding our lives, inviting us home.**

~adapted from *An Iona Prayer Book* by Peter Millar, p. 98

### \*HYMN #19 God of Great and God of Small

*1 God of great and God of small, God of one and God of all, God of weak and God of strong,  
God to whom all things belong,*

*REFRAIN Alleluia, alleluia, praise be to your name.*

*2 God of land and sky and sea, God of life and destiny, God of never-ending power,  
yet beside me every hour, REFRAIN*

*3 God of silence, God of sound, God by whom the lost are found, God of day and darkest night,  
God whose love turns wrong to right, REFRAIN*

*4 God of heaven and God of earth, God of death and God of birth, God of now and days before,  
God who reigns forever more, REFRAIN*

### \*PRAYER FOR EASTERTIDE

L: Let us pray together:

**ALL: God of our dreams, you confound us and disturb us.**

**You shake us up, and you change the way we think and act.**

**You reveal yourself to us and you make your ways known to us.**

**God of our dreams,**

**forgive us when we fail to grasp your will at work in our lives.**

**Forgive us when we are puzzled by your challenges and afraid to step out in faith.**

**Forgive us when we believe that things should always be done our way.**

**Forgive us when our experiences of life are too narrow**

**to open up a bigger world where we can find you.**

**Forgive us when we refuse to accept your word  
and believe that we know what is best for us.**

**Have mercy upon us, Lord.**

**Forgive our lack of confidence, our lack of trust, our lack of vision,  
and bring to us a deeper sense of your peace and understanding,  
that our lives can be made new in you and our sins forgiven.**

**We ask these things in the name of Christ Jesus.**

**Amen.**

#### **\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: Do not be afraid! In Christ, God comes near to us, bringing hope, joy and forgiveness into our lives.

**ALL: 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 #243 Be Not Afraid**

*Be not afraid; sing out for joy! Christ is risen, alleluia!*

*Be not afraid; sing out for joy! Christ is risen, alleluia!*

#### **\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

L: This is the Good News—the grave is empty, Christ is risen.

**P: Hallelujah!**

L: This is the Good News—the light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness can never put it out.

**P: Hallelujah!**

L: Christ is our peace,

**P: the indestructible peace we now share with each other.**

L: The peace of Christ be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

DISCOVERY TIME - Presentation of Bibles to Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders

#### **ANTHEM**

#### **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.

Acts 13:1-3, 14:8-18 (NRSV Updated Edition) - Paul and Barnabas

Reader 1: Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a childhood friend of Herod the ruler, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

Reader 2: In Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been lame from birth. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. And Paul, looking at him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And the man sprang up and began to walk.

Reader 1: When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!” Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates; he and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice.

Reader 2: When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, “People, why are you doing this? We are mortals just like you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations he allowed all peoples to follow their own ways, yet he has not left himself without a witness in doing good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons and filling you with food and your hearts with joy.” Even with these words, they scarcely restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

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 #20 God of the Sparrow

*REFRAIN All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.*

*1 Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings, God made their glowing colors; God made their tiny wings. REFRAIN*

*2 The purple headed mountain, the river running by, the sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky. REFRAIN*

*3 The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun, the ripe fruits in the garden, God made them every one. REFRAIN*

*4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lis that we might tell how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well. REFRAIN*

## A MOMENT FOR PRAYER

*Pray the Day - TURNING*

## 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

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.

## OFFERTORY

~ Offerings may be placed in the basket located at the back of church or given online at [www.firstpresmv.com](http://www.firstpresmv.com)

### \*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING #607 Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;  
praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leader: Let us pray together:

**ALL: Generous God, you have done so many things and given us so much.**

**May all our gifts bring a reaction of awe and wonder and surprise!**

**Through these gifts returned to you, may the darkness become light,**

**may our brokenness be made whole, may our weakness be your strength,**

**and may we play our small part in the healing of all the Nations.**

**We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.**

### \*HYMN #250 In the Bulb There Is a Flower

*1 In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise:  
butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until in season, something God alone can see.*

*2 There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody; there's a dawn in every darkness,  
bringing hope to you and me. From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

*3 In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity; in our doubt there is believing;  
in our life, eternity. In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.*

### \*BENEDICTION

### \*POSTLUDE

*All are welcome in the Social Hall (lower level) to enjoy coffee, juice, treats and conversation.*

Thank you to the following people for helping with our service this morning:

Emily Fitzpatrick, Liturgist

Gerald Gerber, AV Crew

First Pres Mount Vernon Staff:

Lori Wunder, Pastor

Jonathan Walsh, Director of Christian Education

Julia Andrews, Director of Music

Donna Warhover, Office Manager

Trent Bowman, Custodian