

**Sunday Worship - May 7, 2023**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**



*Narrative Lectionary Week 32 - The Season of Easter*  
*The Letter to the Romans: Paul Introduces Himself*

**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: O God, who called all life into being,

**P: the earth, sea and sky are yours.**

L: Your presence is all around us,

**P: every atom is full of your energy.**

L: Your Spirit enlivens all who walk the earth,

**P: with her we yearn for justice to be done,**

L: for creation to be restored,

**P: for the hungry to be fed,**

L: for captives to be released,

**P: for your kingdom of peace to come on earth.**

*~ from Iona Abbey Worship Book, "A Service for Justice and Peace"*

### \*HYMN #314 Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness (Christ, Be Our Light)

*1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people, light for the world to see. REFRAIN*

*REFRAIN Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

*2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair.  
Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice. REFRAIN*

*3 Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for water, many still thirst.  
Make us your bread, broken for others, shared until all are fed. REFRAIN*

*4 Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us your building, sheltering others, walls made of living stone. REFRAIN*

*5 Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come. REFRAIN*

### \*PRAYER FOR EASTERTIDE

L: Let us pray together:

**ALL: O God, gladly we live and move and have our being in you.**

**Yet always in the midst of this creation-glory,**

**we see sin's shadow and feel death's darkness:**

**around us in the earth, sea and sky, the abuse of matter;**

**beside us in the broken, the hungry and the poor, the betrayal of one another; and often, deep within us, a striving against your Spirit.**

**O Trinity of love, forgive us that we may forgive one another,  
heal us that we may be people of healing,  
and renew us that we also may be makers of peace.**

*Time of Silence*

**\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: Friends, God takes all of our messiness and blesses it with possibility; takes our confession and molds it into a new beginning. Believe the good news!

**P: We are forgiven, renewed, loved. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**\*RESPONSE** Day by Day (sing through three times)

*Day by day, day by day*

*Oh, dear Lord, three things I pray*

*To see thee more clearly*

*Love thee more dearly*

*Follow thee more nearly, day by day (by day by day by day)*

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

L: We are the people of the risen Christ,

**P: Sharing the good news of love and peace!**

L: Christ's peace is upon us,

**P: Sending us into the world.**

L: The peace of Christ be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

**DISCOVERY TIME**

**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.

Romans 1:1-17 (Common English Bible)

Introduction to Paul's Letter

*Greeting*

Reader 1: From Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for God's good news. God promised this good news about his Son ahead of time through his prophets in the holy scriptures. His Son was descended from David. He was publicly identified as God's Son with power through his resurrection from the dead, which was based on the Spirit of holiness. This Son is Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we have received God's grace and our appointment to be apostles. This was to bring all Gentiles to faithful obedience for his name's sake. You who are called by Jesus Christ are also included among these Gentiles.

**Congregation: To those in Rome who are dearly loved by God and called to be God's people. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

*Thanksgiving and Paul's plans to visit*

Reader 2: First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because the news about your faithfulness is being spread throughout the whole world. I serve God in my spirit by preaching the good news about God's Son, and God is my witness that I continually mention you in all my prayers. I'm always asking that somehow, by God's will, I might succeed in visiting you at last. I really want to see you to pass along some spiritual gift to you so that you can be strengthened. What I mean is that we can mutually encourage each other while I am with you. We can be encouraged by the faithfulness we find in each other, both your faithfulness and mine.

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that I planned to visit you many times, although I have been prevented from coming until now. I want to harvest some fruit among you, just as I have done among the other Gentiles. I have a responsibility both to Greeks and to those who don't speak Greek, both to the wise and to the foolish.

**Congregation: That's why I'm ready to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. I'm not ashamed of the gospel: it is God's own power for salvation to all who have faith in God, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. God's righteousness is being revealed in the gospel, from faithfulness for faith, as it is written, *The righteous person will live by faith.***

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 #537 When At This Table

*1 When at this table I receive a blessing, the broken bread, the wine of life for me, then let me share the peace with you, my neighbor, and let the Spirit set our spirits free.*

*2 If at this table I have need of healing, unbidden grief, relationship gone wrong, then let me know the hands of God enfolding, and let lament become believing song.*

*3 If at this table I forget the hungry, the dispossessed and warfare's spreading stain, then let this bread become the bread of judgment, this wine the sharp awareness of that pain.*

*4 If at this table I make dedication to give my life in serving what is good, then let my center be where God invites me, and show the words of Jesus understood.*

*5 What faith I have, I bring to join this table, what hope I hold, in Christ is taught and true; with brothers, sisters, I will share the blessing, the feast where God is making all things new.*

CALL FOR THE OFFERING & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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.

**ALL: Generous God, we give thanks for all that you have provided for us.**

**We bring these offerings to you with the hope that you will use them and us for your work in the world. Open our hearts and minds to what you are up to, O God. Give us eyes to see the world as you see it, and the imagination to dream—and work for—the world you desire. In Christ's name we ask it. Amen.**

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)

## SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

### INVITATION

### THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: The Living God is with us!

**P: And with all creation!**

L: Lift up your hearts!

**P: We lift them to the living God.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Creator of all.

**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Living God, who loves us with the faithful care of a father and mother. For this reason we join with all creation to proclaim your glory:

**ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy One, God of power, God of love.**

**Earth, sea, and sky are full of your glory.**

**With joy we praise you! With joy we praise you! Amen.**

L: We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious Creator, source of life. Your Spirit has always been with creation, guiding its development, calling forth life, infusing beauty, inspiring joy and love. In your infinite love you created us in your image and allowed us to share in the precious gift of life. You gave us a home in this beautiful world to live in harmony with you, with one another, and with all your creatures.

But we have so often turned from your love and wisdom. We have chosen our own way and broken faith with you, our neighbors, and our fellow creatures. Now all around us we see the tragic harvest of the bitter seed we have sown.

Yet through it all, you have remained faithful to us. You graciously call us to turn from our destructive ways and return to you. You sent us prophets, priests, sages, storytellers, and poets to lead us to repentance and wisdom. In the fullness of time, through Mary, a humble woman full of faith, you sent Jesus into the world.

Living among us, Jesus loved us. In word and deed, he proclaimed the good news of your reign. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, and in imitation of your perfect love, he taught us to love neighbor, stranger, outsider, and enemy. He redirected us from violence to peace, from fear to faith, from rivalry to mutual service, and from worry and greed to generosity and joy. He taught us to pray:

### 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.**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

On the night before he showed us the full extent of his love, Jesus took a loaf of bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, he took a cup of wine. Again he gave thanks and gave it to his friends, saying, "Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink this cup, remember me."

Now, gathered as one family around this table of joyful reconciliation and fellowship, united in your Spirit, we receive these gifts, and we gratefully offer you our lives as a living sacrifice. As Christ stretched out his arms upon the cross to welcome the whole world into your gracious embrace, we rejoice to enter that embrace and with you, extend it to all. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to the living God be honor, glory, and praise, forever and ever. Amen.

#### SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: Lord Jesus Christ, as your body and blood were separated on the cross, so now they have been rejoined in us. So fill us with your faith and Spirit that we may be the embodiment of you in our world.

**P: As you have fed us at your table of grace, help us to go forth in grace and hospitality to others. Amen.**

#### \*HYMN #22 God of the Sparrow

*1 God of the sparrow, God of the whale, God of the swirling stars, How does the creature say Awe?  
How does the creature say Praise?*

*2 God of the earthquake, God of the storm, God of the trumpet blast, How does the creature cry Woe?  
How does the creature cry Save?*

*3 God of the rainbow, God of the cross, God of the empty grave, How does the creature say Grace?  
How does the creature say Thanks?*

*4 God of the hungry, God of the sick, God of the prodigal, How does the creature say Care?  
How does the creature say Life?*

*5 God of the neighbor, God of the foe, God of the pruning hook, How does the creature say Love?  
How does the creature say Peace?*

*6 God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart, How do your children say Joy?  
How do your children say Home?*

#### \*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:

Craig Engel, Liturgist  
Scott Larson & Gerald Gerber, AV Crew  
Elaine Bishop, Pete Rian, Teresa Sullivan, Communion Servers  
The Choir

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