

**Sunday Worship - June 11, 2023**



*“I’ve Been Meaning to Ask...”  
Summer Worship Series - Where Are You From?*

**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

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We are from north and south.

**All: We are from town and out in the country.**

Leader: We are from this community and from others far away.

**All: We are from big families and dinners made for one.**

Leader: We are from stages of grief and stages of love.

**All: We are from hot summers and cold winters.**

Leader: We are from kitchens with passed down recipes,  
and front porches with old, familiar swings.

**All: We are from the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky.**

Leader: We are from a lot of places, but today we are here.

**All: Today we are together.**

**Holy God, gather us in.**

*~Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*

## \*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

Leader: If we were to call the prayer of confession by another name,  
we could call it a moment for truth telling—

A moment to pause, to reflect,  
to be honest about the places we want to grow  
and the way we need God's help.

Family of faith, there is power in honesty.

So pray with me. We worship a loving and gracious God.

**All: When people heard that Jesus was from Nazareth,  
they asked, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"**

**We confess, God of beginnings, that we have asked the same question.**

**Can anything good come from that other town?**

**From a school with poor test scores?**

**From a criminal history?**

**From the opposite political party?**

**From a history of addiction?**

**From a faith with doubt?**

**From a church with faults?**

**Holy God, forgive us for doubting that you are in all things at all times.**

**Open our eyes to see your goodness, not as something that resides here or there,  
but as the expansive, always present grace that it is.**

**Can anything good come from there?**

**Yes. Always yes. Amen.**

*~Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*

## \*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Family of faith, if you ever ask yourself,

"Can anything good come from this messy and human life of mine?"

Remember this: God is always whispering, "Yes."

You were created in the image of God.

Your origin story is one of goodness and love from the very beginning.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**All: God is here. God is at work among us.**

**We are forgiven. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.**

*~ Prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*

## \*RESPONSE #435 There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

*1. There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea.*

*There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.*

*There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.*

*There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.*

*2. For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.*

*And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.*

*If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's word,*

*And our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.*

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## DISCOVERY TIME

### SCRIPTURE

Leader: In the beginning was the Word.

**All: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

Leader: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Genesis 2:4b-15 (Common English Bible) - A Creation Story

Reader 1: This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

On the day the Lord God made earth and sky— before any wild plants appeared on the earth, and before any field crops grew, because the Lord God hadn't yet sent rain on the earth and there was still no human being to farm the fertile land, though a stream rose from the earth and watered all of the fertile land— the Lord God formed the human from the topsoil of the fertile land and blew life's breath into his nostrils. The human came to life. The Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east and put there the human he had formed. In the fertile land, the Lord God grew every beautiful tree with edible fruit, and also he grew the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Reader 2: A river flows from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides into four headwaters. The name of the first river is the Pishon. It flows around the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. That land's gold is pure, and the land also has sweet-smelling resins and gemstones. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It flows around the entire land of Cush. The name of the third river is the Tigris, flowing east of Assyria; and the name of the fourth river is the Euphrates.

The Lord God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it.

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## REFLECTION

Rev. Bill Warhover

## HYMN #318 In Christ There Is No East or West

*1. In Christ there is no east or west,  
in him no south or north,  
but one great fellowship of love  
throughout the whole wide earth.*

*2. In Christ shall true hearts everywhere  
their high communion find,  
his service is the golden cord  
close binding humankind.*

*3. Join hands, disciples of the faith,  
what e'er your race may be.  
All children of the living God  
are surely kin to me.*

*4. In Christ now meet both east and west;  
in him meet south and north.  
All Christly souls are one in him  
throughout the whole wide earth.*

## SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**All: 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: Friends, we are being invited to come and see a deeper life of faith.

One of the ways we can say yes is by giving what we have—time, money, and/or our talents.

So let us say yes to this invitation of faith together each and every day. Amen.

*~Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

## 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)

## \*DOXOLOGY #607 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

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

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**All: All that we are and all that we have, are gifts from you, most generous Spirit.**

**Unclench our hands from grasping, free our hearts from the need of having,  
and channel our work into sharing your generosity among all your children. Amen.**

*~Words for Worship 2 by Diane Zaerr Brennehan, #144*

## \*HYMN A Covenant of Grace

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*1. We all come from the dusty earth  
And from the places of our birth  
Ancestral stories, who we'll be  
We bring it all to "come and see"*

*2. We all have wounds that no one sees  
Oppression, trauma, and disease  
When we bear witness to the pain  
It can begin to heal again*

*3. We all need people who will be  
with us in solidarity  
No explanation, no defense  
Just ministry of their presence*

*4. Surprised by God's unboundless love  
From many walks of life we come  
To build a covenant of grace  
And in our differences embrace*

## \*JUNE BIRTHDAY BLESSING & 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