

Sunday Worship - August 20, 2023



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Blessing of the Backpacks

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: Calling all children of the Living God:
the gospel is good news for every age and every stage.

All: Let us worship together, the young and the old.

Leader: The good news is proclaimed in God's words,
and also with crayons and silly songs, lunchtime and recess,
stories and science labs, kindness and community.

All: Let us worship together, every generation.

Leader: We come together with different abilities and disabilities,
learning in a rainbow of ways and styles.

All: Let us worship together, with our family of faith.

Leader: All are welcome in the arms of Christ who proclaimed, "Let the children come!"

All: Let us worship together, united in our eternal hope.

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*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*

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 forevermore, REFRAIN*

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Jesus said: "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

We know these commandments, but how difficult they are to live it out. Let us confess our failure to God and one another. Let us pray:

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Merciful God, in your gracious presence
we confess our sin and the sin of this world.
Although Christ is among us as our peace,
we are a people divided against ourselves
as we cling to the values of a broken world.
The profit and pleasures we pursue
lay waste the land and pollute the seas.
The fears and jealousies that we harbor
set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation.
We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom,
of intellect and reason, and have turned them into bonds of oppression.
Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us.
Set us free to serve you in the world
as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ.**

Pause for silent prayer.

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: These are the words of Jesus. They are strong and true, so believe them:

“I have come that you may have life in all its fullness.”

“Go in peace; your sins are forgiven:

Come, each one, and follow me.”

All: Now, God, help us to live as a forgiven people—visibly different, gloriously free, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

~ A Wee Worship Book, Fourth Incarnation, pp. 44-46

*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: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

DISCOVERY TIME – Blessing of the Backpacks

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.

Matthew 15:10-28 (NRSV) - Things That Defile & the Canaanite Woman's Faith

Reader 1: Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."

Reader 2: Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

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. Lori Wunder

HYMN #754 Help Us Accept Each Other (sung to SALLEY GARDENS)

*1. Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted, and meant to love and live.*

*2. Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them, or as they may become.*

3. *Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness, and laughter's healing art.*

4. *Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance, for justice and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us; make us one!*

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: Scripture says, "So here's what I want you to do, God helping you:

Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for God. —Romans 12:1, The Message

With gladness, let us present the offerings of our life and labor to the Lord.

OFFERTORY

*The children will collect the Noisy Offering for the FISH Fund**

**Started by contributions from local congregations, these funds are used to help people who come through Mount Vernon and Lisbon and need assistance with a hotel room, food, gas, etc. Requests come from local congregations and the MVL Police Department. Thank you for helping our neighbors in need, even when they are just passing through!*

~ Other offerings may be placed in the basket located at the back of church or given online at www.firstpresmv.com

*DOXOLOGY #70 What Does the Lord Require of You?

What does the Lord require of you? What does the Lord require of you?

Justice, kindness, walk humbly with your God.

To seek justice and love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We offer ourselves with our gifts, Giver and Sustainer of Life, confident that you have a purpose for them and for us. Expand our limited vision to embrace new possibilities. We rededicate ourselves to you with our giving. May our offerings reach beyond the barriers of our former thinking and doing. In the Spirit of Christ, we would pray and live. Amen.

***HYMN #543 God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me**

*1. God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to move my voice;
God, be the strength to now uphold me: O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

*2. Bind to myself the Name of Holy, great cloud of witnesses enfold;
prophets, apostles, angels witness: O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

*3. Brightness of sun and glow of moonlight, flashing of lightning, strength of wind,
depth of the sea to soil of planet: O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

*4. Walking behind to hem my journey, going ahead to light my way,
and from beneath, above, and all ways: O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

*5. Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that hear my voice,
Christ in the hearts of all who know me: O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

***AUGUST 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:

Jonathan Walsh, Liturgist
Gerald Gerber, AV
Pat Hogan, Fellowship Host

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