

**Sunday Worship - September 24, 2023**  
**Narrative Lectionary Year 2, Week 3**



*Woodcut of Jacob wrestling with God by Walter Habdank (German, 1930–2001)*

*Jacob Wrestles God*  
*Genesis 32:9-13, 22-30*

**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: Divine promises,  
received and remembered:

**All: to wait for, to work toward, to wrestle with.**

Leader: Divine power,  
saving and transforming:

**All: making and marking us God's own.**

Divine purpose,  
pushing and pulling:

**All: challenging and changing us into blessing.**

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## \*HYMN #475 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

- 1. Come, thou Fount of every blessing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;  
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unchanging love!*
- 2. Here I raise my Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when I stranger, wandering from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.*
- 3. O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;  
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.*

## \*CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: God is light and truth, yet too often we live among shadows and lies.

People of God, let us acknowledge who and whose we are;

let us ask our powerful God to illumine us with grace and truth in Jesus, our Lord.

Let us pray:

## \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Creator God, we forget the relationship we have with you.**

**We forget that you make a claim on us.**

**We reverse the roles and make demands on you.**

**We expect you to make our lives easier and our projects successful.**

**We confess that we do not ask often enough for you to give us what we need to fulfill your expectations.**

**We do not ask often enough for you to give us strength for hardships  
as we seek to live out our witness in the world.**

**We are not wrong to petition you for things we need,  
but we are wrong to expect you always to make our way smooth.**

**We do not look for the spiritual growth in the struggles we face.**

**Forgive us for expecting you to do things our way.**

**Teach us to expect hardships and to see your hand in them.**

**Help us to hold on until we receive the blessing you have in store for us.**

**In the name of Jesus we pray.**

*Pause for silent prayer.*

### \*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Amen.

Hear the good news!

In Christ, God embraces us, forgives us, and strengthens us to live a renewed life.

**All: Thanks be to God for this gift! Amen.**

### \*RESPONSE #583 Gloria, Gloria (in Latin)

*Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

*Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!*

### \*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 32:9-13 (Common English Bible) - Jacob Asks God for Help

Reader 1: Jacob said, "Lord, God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I'll make sure things go well for you,' I don't deserve how loyal and truthful you've been to your servant. I went away across the Jordan with just my staff, but now I've become two camps. Save me from my brother Esau! I'm afraid he will come and kill me, the mothers, and their children. You were the one who told me, 'I will make sure things go well for you, and I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, so many you won't be able to count them.'"

Jacob spent that night there. From what he had acquired, he set aside a gift for his brother Esau.

Genesis 32:22-30 (Common English Bible) - Jacob Wrestles God

Reader 2: Jacob got up during the night, took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed the Jabbok River's shallow water. He took them and everything that belonged to him, and he helped them cross the river. But Jacob stayed apart by himself, and a man wrestled with him until dawn broke. When the man saw that he couldn't defeat Jacob, he grabbed Jacob's thigh and tore a muscle in Jacob's thigh as he wrestled with him. The man said, "Let me go because the dawn is breaking."

Reader 1: But Jacob said, "I won't let you go until you bless me."

He said to Jacob, "What's your name?" and he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name won't be Jacob any longer, but Israel, because you struggled with God and with men and won."

Jacob also asked and said, "Tell me your name."

Reader 2: But he said, "Why do you ask for my name?" and he blessed Jacob there. Jacob named the place Peniel, "because I've seen God face-to-face, and my life has been saved."

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.**

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Howard Chapman

HYMN #822 When We Are Living

- 1. When we are living, it is in Christ Jesus, and when we're dying, it is in the Lord.  
Both in our living and in our dying, we belong to God; we belong to God.*
- 2. Through all our living, we our fruits must give. Good works of service are for offering.  
When we are giving, or when receiving, we belong to God; we belong to God.*
- 3. 'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain, when sensing beauty or in love's embrace,  
Whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing, we belong to God; we belong to God.*
- 4. Across this wide world, we shall always find those who are crying with no peace of mind,  
but when we help them, or when we feed them, we belong to God; we belong to God.*

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: With thankfulness we give in gratitude and joy.

With prayerfulness we give in sacrifice and love.

With hopefulness we give in commitment to God.

Let us be faithful stewards of our time, our talents, and our money, this day and every day.

## OFFERTORY

~ Other 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 #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 #65 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

- 1. Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.  
I am weak, but thou art mighty. Hold me with thy powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more; feed me till I want no more.*
- 2. Open now the crystal fountain, whence the healing stream doth flow.  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through.  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer, be thou still my strength and shield; be thou still my strength and shield.*
- 3. When I tread the verge of Jordan, bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell's destruction, land me safe on Canaan's side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises I will ever give to thee; I will ever give to thee.*

## \*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:

Pat Hogan, Accompanist

Barb Bjork, Liturgist

Gerald Gerber, AV

Fellowship Host

First Pres Mount Vernon Staff:

Lori Wunder, Pastor

Jonathan Walsh, Director of Christian Education and Treasurer

*Position Vacant, Music Director*

Donna Warhover, Office Manager

Trent Bowman, Custodian