

Sunday Worship - October 15, 2023
Narrative Lectionary Year 2, Week 6



“Whither Thou Goest” by Sandy Freckleton Gagon

Responding to God’s Love: Ruth Follows Naomi
Ruth 1:1-17

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

Piano Side: God has called us together in community,

Pulpit Side: God has given us to each other to be family,

All: to support one another in times of trouble and rejoice in times of happiness.

Piano Side: With or without a strategic plan,

Pulpit Side: With or without a shiny, flashy campaign,

All: We will love one another as we have been loved by God.

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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: We know that God's mercy is unfailing, and so we dare tell the truth about ourselves and our world. In the confidence of God's children let us make our confession together:

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: How easy it is, O God, to overlook the very people whose labor makes our lives possible.

How easy it is, O God, to change the focus to the big names who take all the credit.

**How easy it is, O God, simply tell the story from an angle
that never shows those behind the scenes.**

**Forgive us when we think only the spectacular stories are worth telling,
and we erase the beauty and love of those**

whose day-to-day commitment is the foundation of our life together.

How easy it is, O God, to speak words of commitment...and how hard it is to follow through.

**How easy it is, O God, to judge the motivations and responsibilities of others,
to assume the worst when we don't know their full story.**

**How easy it is, O God, to talk about love without ever acting on it.
Forgive us when we withhold the grace we want for ourselves,
and when we fail to live up to your call.
Forgive us and heal our hearts and our community,
that the broken places may be made whole and the hope of your kingdom may be seen,
here and now. Amen.**

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Pause for silent prayer.

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Our God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love — God is a thousand parts compassion for every four parts judgment. Trusting in God’s steadfast love to the thousandth generation, take up your place in this forgiven family, and live in that grace so that all may know the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Hear and believe this good news:

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

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*RESPONSE #583 Gloria, Gloria (in Latin)

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE** (As we approach flu season, you are invited to share the peace in a variety of ways including waving, bowing, bumping elbows, etc.)

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

DISCOVERY TIME - Noisy Offering for Southeast Linn Community Center

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.

Ruth 1:1-17 (Common English Bible) - Ruth Remains with Naomi

Reader 1: During the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. A man with his wife and two sons went from Bethlehem of Judah to dwell in the territory of Moab. The name of that man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the territory of Moab and settled there.

But Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died. Then only she was left, along with her two sons. They took wives for themselves, Moabite women; the name of the first was Orpah and the name of the second was Ruth. And they lived there for about ten years. But both of the sons, Mahlon and Chilion, also died. Only the woman was left, without her two children and without her husband.

Reader 2: Then Naomi arose along with her daughters-in-law to return from the field of Moab, because while in the territory of Moab she had heard that the Lord had paid attention to his people by providing food for them. She left the place where she had been, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They went along the road to return to the land of Judah.

Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, “Go, turn back, each of you to the household of your mother. May the Lord deal faithfully with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. May the Lord provide for you so that you may find security, each woman in the household of her husband.” Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.

Reader 1: But they replied to her, “No, instead we will return with you, to your people.”

Naomi replied, “Turn back, my daughters. Why would you go with me? Will there again be sons in my womb, that they would be husbands for you? Turn back, my daughters. Go. I am too old for a husband. If I were to say that I have hope, even if I had a husband tonight, and even more, if I were to bear sons— would you wait until they grew up? Would you refrain from having a husband? No, my daughters. This is more bitter for me than for you, since the Lord’s will has come out against me.”

Reader 2: Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth stayed with her. Naomi said, “Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her gods. Turn back after your sister-in-law.”

But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to abandon you, to turn back from following after you. Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do this to me and more so if even death separates me from you.”

SERMON

Rev. Lori Wunder

HYMN #821 My Life Flows On (How Can I Keep from Singing?)

1. *My life flows on in endless song, above earth’s lamentation.
I hear a clear, though far off hymn, that hails a new creation. REFRAIN*

REFRAIN:

*No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I’m clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?*

2. *Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing? REFRAIN*
3. *What though my joys and comforts die? I know my Savior liveth.
What though the darkness gather round? Songs in the night he giveth. REFRAIN*
4. *The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing? REFRAIN*

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

*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 I Will Trust in the Lord

- 1. I will trust in the Lord, I will trust in the Lord,
I will trust in the Lord, till I die;
I will trust in the Lord, I will trust in the Lord,
I will trust in the Lord till I die.*
- 2. Neighbor, will you trust in the Lord, neighbor, will you trust in the Lord,
Neighbor, will you trust in the Lord, till you die;
Neighbor, will you trust in the Lord, neighbor, will you trust in the Lord,
Neighbor, will you trust in the Lord, till you die.*
- 3. Children, will you trust in the Lord, children, will you trust in the Lord,
Children, will you trust in the Lord, till you die;
Children, will you trust in the Lord, children, will you trust in the Lord,
Children, will you trust in the Lord, till you die.*

*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

Liturgist

Scott Larson, AV

Beth Simon, 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