

Sunday Worship - October 1, 2023
World Communion Sunday



Pharaoh's daughter finding Moses, oil on canvas, Anthea Craigmyle (1933-2016)

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: Sometimes we feel like asking God: are you paying attention?

All: And God asks us too: are we paying attention?

Pulpit Side: To the people right in front of us,

Piano Side: to the people who live with the consequences of our actions,

Pulpit Side: to the realities with which our neighbors live,

Piano Side: to the opportunities presented to us.

All: Are we paying attention?

Leader: God sees, God knows, and God moves through us to respond.

All: We will listen, and look, and go.

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*HYMN #388 Come All You People

Come all you people, come and praise your Maker;

come all you people, come and praise your Maker;

come all you people, come and praise your Maker;

come now and worship the Lord.

U-ya-i mo-se, ti-na-ma-te Mwari;

U-ya-i mo-se, ti-na-ma-te Mwari;

U-ya-i mo-se, ti-na-ma-te Mwari;

U-ya-i mo-se zvi-no.

*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: You are the giver of Abundant Life, O God,
and yet we so often accidentally choose the empire's ways of death instead.**

**We confess that we have allowed the perfect to become the enemy of the good,
and when we can't do everything, we do nothing.**

**We admit that we have looked down on the little things as not enough,
while not actually doing any of the big things we talk about.**

And so, little by little, oppression grows unchallenged until we are overwhelmed.

Forgive us, Lord, for our apathy that keeps us from resisting in even the smallest ways.

**Forgive us for overlooking opportunities to do justice
because they don't fit our preconceived notions.**

Forgive us for being so wrapped up in ourselves that we never even notice you calling.

**As Moses turned aside from his everyday economic concern to see you doing a new thing,
turn us aside from those things that consume us**

that we may be set ablaze by your call that brings life instead. Amen.

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*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: 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.

As we approach flu season, you are invited to share the peace in a variety of ways including waving, bowing, bumping elbows, etc.

DISCOVERY TIME

SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION

Rev. Lori Wunder

Exodus 1:8-2:10 (Common English Bible) - A New King...Who Didn't Know Joseph

Now a new king came to power in Egypt who didn't know Joseph. He said to his people, "The Israelite people are now larger in number and stronger than we are. Come on, let's be smart and deal with them. Otherwise, they will only grow in number. And if war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us, and then escape from the land." As a result, the Egyptians put foremen of forced work gangs over the Israelites to harass them with hard work. They had to build storage cities named Pithom and Rameses for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they grew and spread, so much so that the Egyptians started to look at the Israelites with disgust and dread. So the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites. They made their lives miserable with hard labor, making mortar and bricks, doing field work, and by forcing them to do all kinds of other cruel work. The king of Egypt spoke to two Hebrew midwives named Shiphrah and Puah: "When you are helping the Hebrew women give birth and you see the baby being born, if it's a boy, kill him. But if it's a girl, you can let her live." Now the two midwives respected God so they didn't obey the Egyptian king's order. Instead, they let the baby boys live.

So the king of Egypt called the two midwives and said to them, "Why are you doing this? Why are you letting the baby boys live?"

The two midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because Hebrew women aren't like Egyptian women. They're much stronger and give birth before any midwives can get to them." So God treated the midwives well, and the people kept on multiplying and became very strong. And because the midwives respected God, God gave them households of their own.

Then Pharaoh gave an order to all his people: "Throw every baby boy born to the Hebrews into the Nile River, but you can let all the girls live."

Now a man from Levi's household married a Levite woman. The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that the baby was healthy and beautiful, so she hid him for three months. When she couldn't hide him any longer, she took a reed basket and sealed it up with black tar. She put the child in the basket and set the basket among the reeds at the riverbank. The baby's older sister stood watch nearby to see what would happen to him.

Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, while her women servants walked along beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds, and she sent one of her servants to bring it to her. When she opened it, she saw the child. The boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. She said, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children."

Then the baby's sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Would you like me to go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?"

Pharaoh's daughter agreed, "Yes, do that." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I'll pay you for your work." So the woman took the child and nursed it. After the child had grown up, she brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I pulled him out of the water."

Exodus 3:1-15 (Common English Bible) - Moses at the Burning Bush

Moses was taking care of the flock for his father-in-law Jethro, Midian's priest. He led his flock out to the edge of the desert, and he came to God's mountain called Horeb. The Lord's messenger appeared to him in a flame of fire in the middle of a bush. Moses saw that the bush was in flames, but it didn't burn up. Then Moses said to himself, Let me check out this amazing sight and find out why the bush isn't burning up.

When the Lord saw that he was coming to look, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!"

Moses said, "I'm here."

Then the Lord said, "Don't come any closer! Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground." He continued, "I am the God of your father, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, "I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them from the Egyptians in order to take them out of that land and bring them to a good and broad land, a land that's full of milk and honey, a place where the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites all live. Now the Israelites' cries of injustice have reached me. I've seen just how much the Egyptians have oppressed them. So get going. I'm sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

But Moses said to God, "Who am I to go to Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

God said, "I'll be with you. And this will show you that I'm the one who sent you. After you bring the people out of Egypt, you will come back here and worship God on this mountain."

But Moses said to God, "If I now come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they are going to ask me, 'What's this God's name?' What am I supposed to say to them?"

God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. So say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'" God continued, "Say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever; this is how all generations will remember me.

HYMN #52 When Israel Was in Egypt's Land

1. *When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go;
oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go! REFRAIN*

*REFRAIN: Go down, (go down,) Moses, (Moses,) way down in Egypt's land;
tell old Pharaoh: let my people go!*

2. *"Thus saith the Lord," bold Moses said, "Let my people go!
If not, I'll smite your firstborn dead. Let my people go!" REFRAIN*

3. *“No more shall they in bondage toil: let my people go!
Let them come out with Egypt’s spoil: let my people go!” REFRAIN*
4. *O let us all from bondage flee; let my people go!
And let us all in Christ be free: let my people go! REFRAIN*

CALL FOR THE OFFERING & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leader: Why do we give to the church?

We give because we have received so much from God.

We give to practice the gratitude for all that God has done for us.

We give because we trust that God can do more with what we have than we can do alone.

So let us practice our gratitude through the giving of our gifts..

**All: Gift-giving God, we bring you what we can offer,
our time, our talents, our finances, our very selves,
in the hope that what we bring, you might magnify, and multiply,
for the work of your love in the world. Amen.**

OFFERTORY

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

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION

Leader: At this table, Christ gathers us in from east and west, north and south...
from places of privilege and places of oppression...
from backgrounds of comfort and of pain.

At this table, the refugee fording the river at night finds a welcome.

At this table, the parent hoping against hope while handing their child into a tiny boat finds help.

At this table, the trafficked worker hidden in the back of the truck finds freedom.

At this table, those people we hear about on the news but never think to find nearby
are not abstract neighbors but treasured guests.

At this table, Christ feeds us with bread, no questions asked about our hunger.

At this table, Christ feeds us with courage to look into the eyes of our neighbor.

At this table, Christ feeds us with himself that we may in turn be his Body in the world.

No exclusions, no exceptions, this is Christ’s table,
and he is the one who invites us to see the extraordinary
in this ordinary feast he has prepared.

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THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: Praise to you, O God, for all your good works.
You created the world and called it good
and made us in your image to live together in love.
You made a covenant with us,
and even when we turned from you,
you remained ever faithful.
Thank you, O God, for sending us your Son.
He lived among us and told your story.
He healed the sick and welcomed sinners.
He shared our pain and died our death,
then rose to new life that we might live,
and all creation be restored.
Remembering your boundless love revealed to us in Jesus Christ,
we break bread and share the cup,
giving ourselves to you to live for him in joy and praise.
Great is the mystery of faith:
All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine
that they may become for us the body and blood of Christ
and that we may be his body for the world.
By your Spirit unite us with Christ and one another
until we feast with him and with all your saints
in your eternal realm of justice and peace.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

SHARING THE MEAL

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: God of Abundance,
with this bread of life and cup of salvation
you have united us with Christ,
making us one with all your people.
**All: Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue forever in the risen life
of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

*HYMN #770 I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table (verses 1, 3, 4)

1. *I'm gonna eat at the welcome table; I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, Alleluia.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table; I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, Alleluia.*
3. *I'm gonna join with sisters, brothers; I'm gonna join with sisters, brothers, Alleluia.
I'm gonna join with sisters, brothers; I'm gonna join with sisters, brothers, Alleluia.*
4. *Here all the world will find a welcome; here all the world will find a welcome, Alleluia.
Here all the world will find a welcome; here all the world will find a welcome, Alleluia.*

*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:

Mina Massaquoi, Accompanist
Scott Larson, AV Crew
Liturgist & Communion Servers
Connie Proffit & Elizabeth Riechers, Fellowship Host

First Pres Mount Vernon Staff:

Lori Wunder, Pastor
Jonathan Walsh, Director of Christian Education
Director of Music - Vacant Position
Donna Warhover, Office Manager
Trent Bowman, Custodian