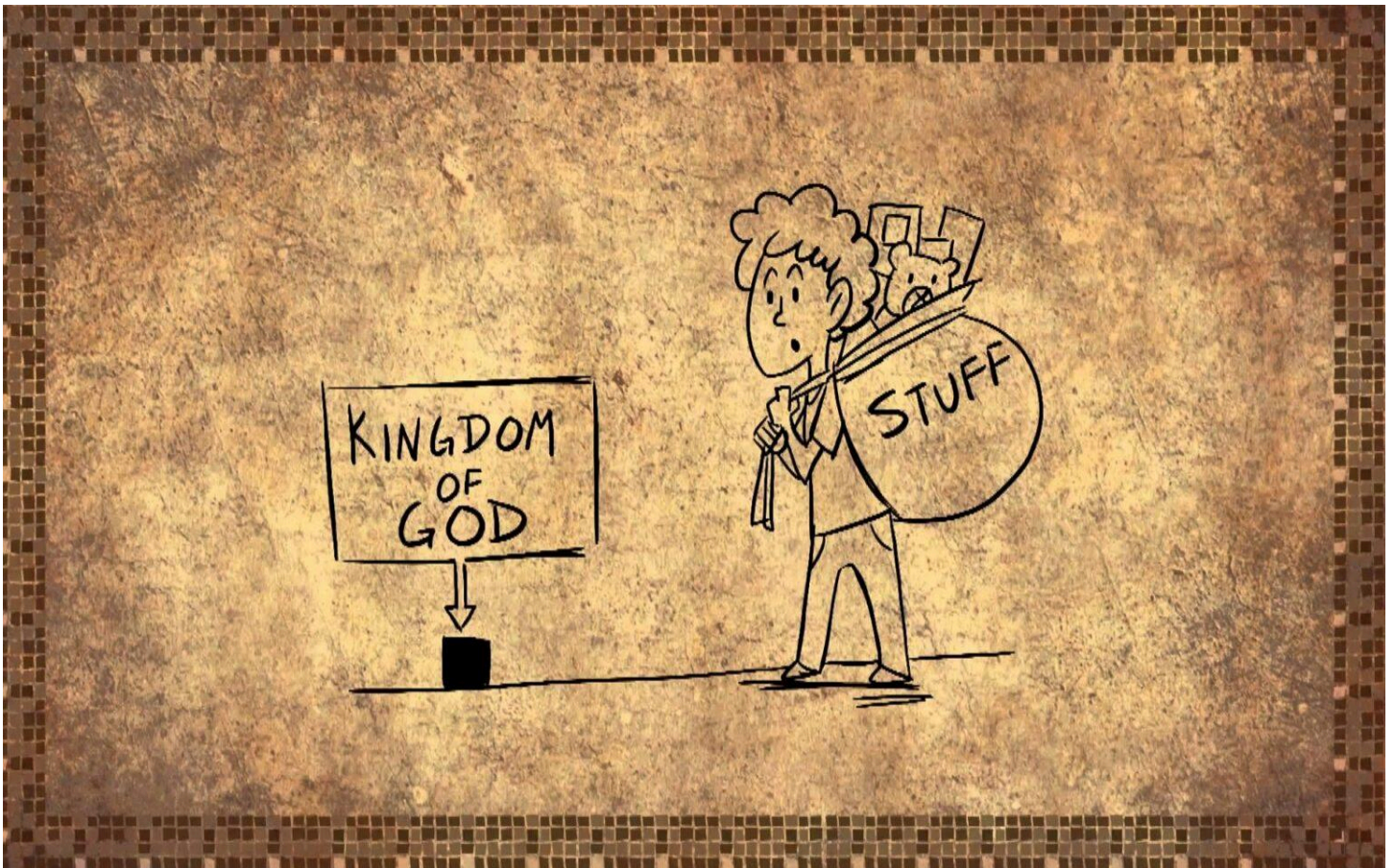


Sunday Worship - July 13, 2025

Summer Worship Series

The Bible & Economic Justice



Luke 4:16-21 & 18:18-30

Wealth & the Kingdom of Heaven

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The time is now —
God's kingdom is at hand.

**All: The time is now —
good news for those who've been left out,
hope for God's will to be done on earth as in heaven.**

Leader: The time is now — the fullness of God's desire for a new world is visible.

**All: The time is now —
for us to act on faith that with God, all things are possible.**

~© Teri Peterson

*OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray:
You have held nothing back from us, O God.
You come among us, in the flesh,
to bring us into your kingdom.
You call us to be all-in,
to trust you,
to rely on you,
for with you there is enough.
Make our faith more than words today.
More than a checklist, more than a personal ticket to heaven,
make us your living Body,
anointed by your Spirit to bring good news
to those who most need your truth and grace.
Amen.

~© Teri Peterson

*HYMN #401 Gather Us In (Here in This Place)

1. Here in this place the 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: here is the place the new light is shining;
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: Who can understand the heart? Only God.

Let us confess the ways we have turned from the One who knows us and saves us.

All: You bring ancient words to life again, O God.

**We confess that sometimes we like it when the words stay on the page,
lifeless between the covers of a book we can take out once a week,
looking for comfort or guidance.**

Yet you insist there is more to the life of faith than ticking the boxes.

**You call us to leave behind our carefully hoarded security,
trusting instead in your providence.**

**You call us to let go of the things that separate us from one another,
trusting instead in the community of your people.**

**We admit that we would prefer to have a nest egg,
a little something for a rainy day,
a cushion to future-proof our plans,
even at the cost of alienating us from true community, or even from you.**

And so we say the right words,

but when we tally up the cost we admit we often find it too high.

Forgive us, Lord.

Forgive us for speaking faith without doing it.
Forgive us for making your word good news to us
so that it is no longer good news to the poor.
We know you are still at work,
and we pray that as your kingdom unfolds, we might be faithful enough to follow.
Amen.

~© Teri Peterson

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: God looks on us with compassion, and God's grace
does not abide by the boundaries and barriers of the human imagination.
So hear and live this good news:
anyone who is in Christ is a new creation, with the opportunity and the power
to live a new life in God's kingdom today
ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen.

*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

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.

Luke 4:16-21 (Common English Bible) - Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth

Reader 1: ¹⁶ Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been raised. On the Sabbath he went to the synagogue as he normally did and stood up to read. ¹⁷ The synagogue assistant gave

him the scroll from the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the prisoners
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to liberate the oppressed,*
¹⁹ *and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

²⁰ He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the synagogue assistant, and sat down. Every eye in the synagogue was fixed on him. ²¹ He began to explain to them, "Today, this scripture has been fulfilled just as you heard it."

Luke 18:18-30 (CEB) - The Wealth Problem

Reader 2: ¹⁸ A certain ruler asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to obtain eternal life?" ¹⁹ Jesus replied, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except the one God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: *Don't commit adultery. Don't murder. Don't steal. Don't give false testimony. Honor your father and mother.*" ²¹ Then the ruler said, "I've kept all of these things since I was a boy." ²² When Jesus heard this, he said, "There's one more thing. Sell everything you own and distribute the money to the poor. Then you will have treasure in heaven. And come, follow me." ²³ When he heard these words, the man became sad because he was extremely rich.

Reader 1: ²⁴ When Jesus saw this, he said, "It's very hard for the wealthy to enter God's kingdom! ²⁵ It's easier for a camel to squeeze through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter God's kingdom." ²⁶ Those who heard this said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ Jesus replied, "What is impossible for humans is possible for God."

Reader 2: ²⁸ Peter said, "Look, we left everything we own and followed you." ²⁹ Jesus said to them, "I assure you that anyone who has left house, husband, wife, brothers, sisters, parents, or children because of God's kingdom ³⁰ will receive many times more in this age and eternal life in the coming age."

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

SONG *The Magic Penny* Malvina Reynolds

Love is something if you give it away, give it away, give it away.
Love is something if you give it away, you end up having more.

It's just like a magic penny, Hold it tight and you won't have any.
Lend it, spend it, and you'll have so many,
they'll roll all over the floor, for

Love is something if you give it away, give it away, give it away.
Love is something if you give it away, you end up having more.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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: There are many ways to offer ourselves, our resources, our lives to God and the way of God. We do so in response to God's abundant love and provision.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leader: Let us pray together:
**All: Lord God, you have given us much from the stores of your love.
Your pockets are deep and you keep giving;
time after time we experience your gracious hand
as it provides us with blessing after blessing.
In comparison we have little to give—or so we think.
When we make our offering,
we do so recognizing the immense cost
of love revealed by the cross and empty tomb,
and we come with thankfulness for your gift to us.
May we be extravagantly generous in the commitments we make,
as we live our lives faithfully as your servants in the world.
Amen.**

*HYMN #741 Guide My Feet

Guide my feet while I run this race; guide my feet while I run this race; (yes, my lord!)
guide my feet while I run this race, for I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

Hold my hand ...

Stand by me ...

I'm your child ...

Search my heart ...

Guide my feet ...

*JULY BIRTHDAY BLESSING & BENEDICTION

Henry Rian

Libby Stewart

Jennifer Lengwin

Gerald Gerber

Trevor Weber

Aubryn Recalde

Emily Fitzpatrick

Gareth Lenhart

Tom Parker

Keith Burge

Dick Hogan

Beckett Thenhaus

*POSTLUDE

Thank you to the following people for helping with our service this morning:

Pat Hogan, Piano

Jim Bonewald, AV

Rozanne Petrick, Coffee Hour Host

First Pres Mount Vernon Staff:

Lori Wunder, Pastor

Cristina Galán, Office Manager

Nona Hutchinson, Treasurer

Jeff Bray, Custodian

Nico Seda, Nursery