

**Sunday Worship - September 27, 2026**

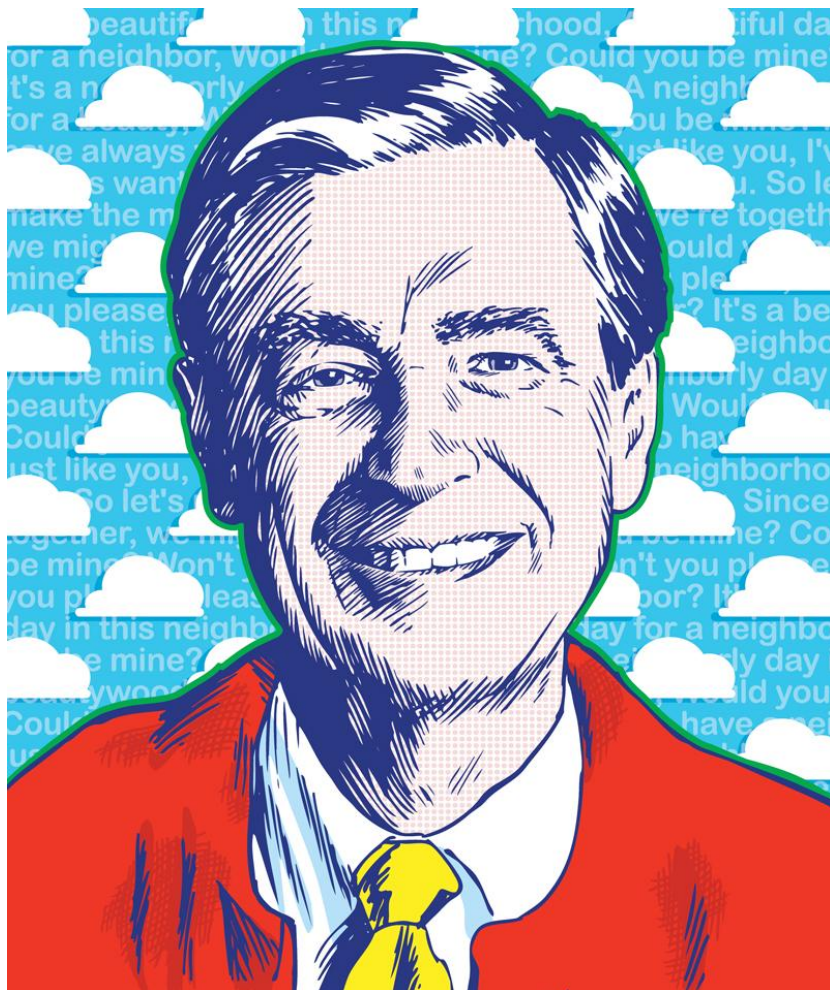


Illustration by Jim Zahniser

**Won't You Be My Neighbor? Week 2**  
*The Strength of Weakness*

Mark 10:13-16, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**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.**

### INTROIT

*It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood, a beautiful day for a neighbor*

*Would you be mine? Could you be mine?*

*It's a neighborly day for a beauty wood, a neighborly day for a beauty*

*Would you be mine? Could you be mine?*

*I have always wanted to have a neighbor just like you*

*I've always wanted to live in a neighborhood with you, so...*

*Let's make the most of this beautiful day*

*Since we're together, we might as well say...*

*Would you be mine? Could you be mine?*

*Won't you be my neighbor?*

*Won't you please? Won't you please?*

*Please won't you be my neighbor?*

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Praise God!

**P: Praise God for all creation:**

L: For people with all kinds of gifts and graces,

**P: For disabilities and abilities with which to share our world,**

L: For lives that struggle toward wholeness.

**P: For the hope that we are given as the human family.**

L: For hopes and dreams and the vision to bring God's vision to a reality.

**P: Where all people are seen as children of God.**

L: Praise God for all of God's children.

**P: Let all God's people sing praises.**

**ALL: Praise God! Amen!**

*~Shaping Sanctuary: Proclaiming God's Grace in an Inclusive Church, p. 100*

**\*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

**\*PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION**

L: Fred Rogers once said, "When we hear the word that we are not lovable, we are not hearing the Word of God. No matter how unlovely, impure or weak or false we may feel ourselves to be, all through the ages God has still called us lovable."  
Jesus' message, according to Fred, is "Be who you are. We'll grow from there."  
I invite you to take a moment to take an honest assessment of who you are,  
of the ways you feel you have failed, are weak or false or unlovable.  
Then be honest about them with God.

*Time of silence*

**\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: Fred Rogers once asked his beloved seminary professor, Dr. William Orr, about the third verse of Martin Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (#275).  
"What is the one little word that will fell the prince of darkness, the word that will strike down evil?" Orr thought for a moment and then said, "One little word: forgive. 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'"  
It is forgiveness that destroys the powers of darkness and evil in our lives and in our world.  
Friends, believe this good news:  
**P: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven, and loved. 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: With the assurance that we are loved and accepted exactly as we are,  
let us share the peace of Christ with one another.  
The peace of Christ be with you.  
**ALL: And also with you.**

## DISCOVERY TIME

### SCRIPTURE

L: In the beginning was the Word.

**P: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

L: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Mark 10:13-16 (NRSV) – Jesus Blesses the Children

**Reader 1:** People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them,

**Jesus (congregation):** “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”

**Reader 2:** And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (NRSV) – Wisdom and Foolishness, Strength and Weakness

**Reader 1:** For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,  
“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

**Reader 2:** Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe.

**Reader 1:** For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**Congregation:** For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

**Reader 2:** Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

**Congregation:** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.

**Reader 1:** He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

L: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

**P: Thanks be to God.**

## REFLECTION

Rev. Lori Wunder

## HYMN # 188 Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong. They are weak but her is strong.

## REFRAIN

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago,  
taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."

## REFRAIN

## SHARING 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: God has shown us the meaning of generosity  
in the beautiful diversity of creation,  
in the overflowing love of Jesus Christ,  
in the never-ending gift of the Holy Spirit.

God has abundantly blessed us and called us  
to be a community that honors each other,  
to serve others with joy,  
to share our love and material possessions.

Let us rejoice in what we have been given and in what is ours to give.

*Offerings may be placed in the basket located at the back of church  
or given online at [www.firstpresmv.com](http://www.firstpresmv.com)*

*We are grateful for all the ways you support our mission and ministry! Thank you!*

## OFFERTORY

### \*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING #70 What Does the Lord Require of You?

Low Voices: What does the Lord require of you?  
What does the Lord require of you?

Middle Voices: Justice, kindness,  
walk humbly with your God.

High Voices: To seek justice and love kindness  
and walk humbly with your God

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**O Generous Provider, accept our small gifts,  
tokens of our great love for you.  
Multiply what we offer to do your good work  
in this church and in your world. Amen.**

\*HYMN #730 I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

1: I sing a song of the saints of God, patient and brave and true,  
who toiled and fought and lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew.  
And one was a doctor, and one was a queen, and one was a shepherdess on the green:  
they were all of them saints of God, and I mean, God helping, to be one too.

2: They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and God's love made them strong;  
and they followed the right, for Jesus' sake, the whole of their good lives long.  
And one was a soldier, and one was a priest, and one was slain by a fierce wild beast:  
and there's not any reason, no, not the least, why I shouldn't be one too.

3: They lived not only in ages past; there are hundreds of thousands still;  
the world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will.  
You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, in church, or in trains, or in shops, or at  
tea;  
for the saints of God are just folk like me, and I mean to be one too.

\*BENEDICTION

You always make each day such a special day, by just your being you.  
Friends, go in peace to love and serve the Lord by loving and serving your neighbors!

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*It's such a good feeling to know you're alive  
It's such a happy feeling, you're growing inside  
And when you wake up ready to say,  
"I think I'll (love my neighbor today)"  
It's such a good feeling, a very good feeling,  
The feeling you know that  
We'll be back when the week is new  
And Fred will have more ideas for you.  
And we'll have things we'll want to talk about.  
Lori: I will, too.*

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

Beth Simon, Liturgist  
Scott Larson & Gerald Gerber, AV system  
Penny Gerber, Coffee Hour