

St. Paul's Free Methodist Church
Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Call to Worship **Christ Be Our Light** **URW 114 (vs. 1, 2)**

Greeting

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, among the people.

We will sing praises to you among the nations.

Hymn of Praise **Great is Thy Faithfulness** **HFL 43**

Prayer

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, that we may continually be given to good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Lesson **Isaiah 25:1-9**

O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt. Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm **Psalm 23**

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

Hymn **My Shepherd, You Supply My Need** **URW 244**

Second Lesson **Philippians 4:1-9**

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel**Matthew 22:1-14**

R: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

R: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon**Apostles' Creed****Liturgy of Lament written by Tasha Morrison from Be the Bridge**

Just as the Israelites were called to remember we must have a common memory and develop a theology for lament. We must lament our history by first acknowledging it.

Leader: We acknowledge that we stood by when the dwellings of our neighbors were cast down, and we ignored the cries of the innocent. (Jeremiah 9:19) Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: Lord, we acknowledge we have not learned to do right; we do not seek restorative justice that benefits all. We have not defended the oppressed. We have not taken up the cause of the fatherless or pleaded the case of the widow (Isaiah 1:17). Instead, we have mocked and punished the poor with our partisanship and apathy. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We lament that we stood by as systemic and institutionalized racism became founding pillars and structures in America and within the church. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We have allowed agendas of an empire to become prominent within your church. We understand that empire aims to take and oppress. We have replaced your kingdom with an empire mentality. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We have formed and developed church structures and denominations while excluding the voice of your global church, due to racism and racial segregation. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We acknowledge the racial hierarchies and structures of privilege many have benefited from and many have been oppressed by. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We have ignored the cries of children because they were not our own. We have discounted the pain of mothers because they were not our own. We have turned a blind eye to the affliction of Brown and Black men because they were not our own. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We have replaced your supremacy with idolization of our nation and racial identity. Lord, have mercy.

Group: We lament.

Leader: We have not required justice, we have not loved others well, and we have not walked in humility in our brokenness.

Group: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: We cry out to you, our God and Redeemer, as the only one who can save us from ourselves. Show us our blind spots. Don't let us hide from you in our shame and guilt. Restore us to your perfect union that can be found in Jesus Christ. Lord, show us how to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you (Micah 6:8).

Group: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

Group: Lord, with deep sorrow we lament. In the powerful name of Jesus Christ, let it be so!

Prayers Of The People

The Peace

By dying, Christ destroyed our death;
In rising, he restores our life;
In giving us his Spirit, he grants us peace.
The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us take a few moments to greet each other with signs of peace and reconciliation.

Doxology

Communion

The Invitation

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, who seek to live in love and peace with your neighbors and who intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in God's holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and humbly make your honest confession to Almighty God.

The Collect

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name; your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen. (BCP)

The Dialogue

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 thanks and praise.

Thanksgiving

We give You thanks for all Your goodness at all times and in all places. You have shielded, rescued, helped and guided us all our days and brought us to this hour, letting us once again worship You and seek Your help. Blessed are You, Creator God, for by Your goodness we have this bread from the soil and this fruit from the vine.

Sanctus/Praise

It is always right and proper that we should, at all times and in all places, give You thanks and praise. Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the inhabitants of heaven, we honor and adore Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying,

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Glory be to Thee, O Lord, most high. Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Almighty God, You created us to enjoy Your fellowship; and even when we turned away, and our love failed, Your love was true. You gave promises to Abraham and Sarah and You were true to Your word. You made covenant with Israel and blessed them. You sent prophets who spoke of a new promise and a new covenant.

In the fullness of time, You gave the world Your only Son. You anointed Him by Your Spirit to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce salvation to the nations. He healed the sick, fed the hungry and ate with people just like us. Through His temptations and ministry, His suffering and death, His resurrection and ascension, He restored to us the fullness of shalom.

You sent Your Holy Spirit, the Counselor, Who, through the apostles and the church, called us to salvation; You adopted us and daily give us aid in the journey of faith by the same Spirit. Our hearts are full, O God, and in confidence that You will bring us to our full inheritance, and give us our place at the heavenly table with Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, we offer thanksgiving.

Joining our voices with all the church, we confess:

**Christ has died,
Christ has risen,
Christ will come again.**

The Gloria Patri

**Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

Prayer of Approach

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, send the power of Your Holy Spirit upon us, and on these gifts, that we may experience anew the suffering, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. May Your Spirit help us to know, in the breaking of this bread and the drinking of this cup, the presence of Christ Who gave His body and blood for all. And may Your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in service to all the world. Amen.

Words of Institution

In the night of his betrayal, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In like manner, after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of this, all of you, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

Words of Distribution

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed upon him in your heart, by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

*References:

- Board of Bishops FMCNA. "Service of Holy Communion—The Alternate Ritual." *Pastors and Church Leaders Manual*. Indianapolis: Light & Life Communications, 2006. 128-135. Print.
- White, Ron. "Nine Alternative Communion Rituals." (Taken from Options 1, 3, 8 and 9.) *Free Methodist Church of North America*, 2012, fmcusa.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/45/files/2012/02/PCLM_CommunionAlternatives.pdf.

Prayer after Communion

God of mercy, God of grace, we bless and praise you for nourishing us with this Easter feast of redemption. Fill us with your Spirit, and make us living signs of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Community Sharing

Offering

Hymn of Response **We Give Thee But Thine Own** **360**

Hymn of Dismissal **The Mountain of God** **(Phil Campbell-Enns; worship folder)**

Dismissal with Blessing

Go in peace, to love and serve God and your neighbor; and may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Next Week's Readings: Exodus 33:12-23; Psalm 99; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22

Preaching This Week: Rev. Ginger Coakley (Eden's Glory)

Preaching Next Week: Vanessa Perkinson