

St. Paul's Free Methodist Church

Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost

Call To Worship Christ, Be Our Light URW 114 (verses 1,3 & 4)

Greeting

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth,

Or ever you had formed the earth and the world,

From everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Hymn Of Praise What is This Place Where We Are Meeting

Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson *Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18*

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the LORD. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm *Psalm 1*

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Hymn Happy is the One

Second Lesson *1 Thessalonians 2:1-8*

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal

does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia

URW 402

Gospel

Matthew 22:34-46

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

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"'? If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

pages 496 and 497

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 I Bind My Heart This Tide

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: Revelation 7:9-17; Psalm 34:1-10, 22; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

Preaching This Week: Rev. Ben Wayman

Preaching Next Week: Ayebale Barigye

Celebrant: Pastor Ayebale Barigye