

# St. Paul's Free Methodist Church

## Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Call To Worship     Awake My Soul

### Greeting

To You we lift up our eyes, O You Who are enthroned in the heavens.

**We sing praises to your name, O Most High!**

Hymn Of Praise     **Blest Be The Tie That Binds**     HFL 479

### Prayer

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

### *First Lesson*                      *Judges 4:1-7*

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. So the LORD sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goim. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years. At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.'"

**R:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

### *Psalms*                              *Psalms 123*

**To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, until he has mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt. Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.**

Hymn                      **How Deep the Father's Love**

### *Second Lesson*                      *1 Thessalonians 5:1-11*

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

**R:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

**Gospel****Matthew 5:1-12**

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

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

**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](http://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**

### **Sending Hymn**

### **The Blessing**

### **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:** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

**Preaching This Week:** Pastor Ayebale Barigye      **Preaching Next Week:** Pastor Kait Mathews