

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

Call To Worship I Stand Amazed

Greeting

O magnify the LORD with me;
Let us exalt God's name together!

Hymn For the Beauty

Prayer

Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson Exodus 1:8-2:10

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them. The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live." Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Psalm 124

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side—let Israel now say—if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when our enemies attacked us, then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us; then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us; then over us would have gone the raging waters. Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth. We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Hymn

Rock of Ages

Second Lesson

Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia

Gospel

Matthew 16:13-20

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

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

R: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Apostles' Creed

Prayers Of The People

A 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!

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 SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

A FREE METHODIST SERVICE*

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

Closing Hymn How Can I Keep From Singing?

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 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

Preaching This Week: Rev. Ben Wayman

Preaching Next Week: Pastor Ayebale Barigye