



First Presbyterian Church, Union MO

## Message from Pastor Bill Vincent

Volume 55; Sept. 2021

My heart aches.

The tragic images from Afghanistan: the crush of people, the desperation; the collapse of the elected government, the bodies decimated by a suicide bomber.

Wildfires spreading out West, and the devastation left behind.

The ground shaking in Haiti, leaving buildings, and lives, in ruins. And insult on top of injury when tropical storms blow and wash through the area.

Flash flooding in Tennessee (and elsewhere), with water rising in minutes and livelihoods, and lives, swept away.

Covid cases rising (how many preventable?!?), with hospital wards pushed beyond capacity and medical staff pushed to the brink.

And my heart aches.

And I don't know what to do.

And I don't know what to say.

So I keep it all in, overwhelmed and numb.

Which tends to mean I'm not much use to anybody.

So, what can I do?

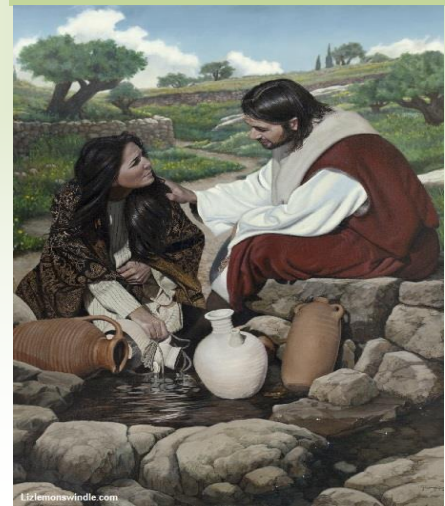
Well, I'm doing one thing right now: I'm talking about it; I'm sharing my heartache; I'm not holding it in and not stuffing it under wraps. I've got to be honest with myself...and with you.

And I can pray. I know: sometimes that seems so lame, like that's an excuse for doing nothing. But it's not an excuse, and it's not doing nothing, so it's not lame. For prayer encourages my honesty with myself (and others)...and especially with God, and that is a needed conversation and open line of communication that nurtures my relationship with God and nurtures me in the way of God. And prayer changes things, including (maybe especially) me; and that's not a bad start.

And I can act: I can do what I can, which may begin with acknowledging to myself that there are some things I cannot do, especially...I cannot carry the world on my shoulders. Not that I don't care about the world and care about other people, whether near or far, known or not. I do care about the world and about others, and I'm pretty sure God wants me to do just that as an important expression of my love for God.

But I cannot carry on my shoulders this world that God created and all the people that God created. God will have to do that -- carry the world and its people, and also carry me (I'm depending on that last one).

But there are things I can do: I can make my voice known through voting and writing elected officials; I can share the gifts I have to reach out and demonstrate my genuine concern; I can encourage and support others who are doing what they can; I can share my concern in conversations with friends; I can speak a kind word and offer a helping hand and commit to meeting and greeting all people as fellow children of God; I can strive to be the best person I am, making a difference in my little corner of the world



And I can give. Yes, I can give of my time to show my concern. I can give my talents to help another. And I can give out of the abundance of my resources to share with others whose livelihoods and bounty have been swept away. I can give to any number of organizations whose connections and contacts extend their reach, and mine. I can give to the church. I can give through the Presbyterian Mission Agency (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/>) or Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (<https://pda.pcusa.org/>), checking out the variety of places I can channel my giving and my care. I can give my heart, and my life, to caring and sharing, to loving and living a kind, compassionate, faithful life.

And I can have faith in God: I can trust God. I can trust that God will show me the way to give and to care and to pray. I can trust that God will convict my heart when I'm not showing I care and will comfort my heart when I've done all I can. I can trust that God will take what I give and use it beyond my capacity and my imagination.

And I can trust that God will hold me in God's hands. And in that conviction, I can be encouraged that God will hold this world, and all its people, in God's hands, now and always.

And I can trust and look to God to make me willing and show me the way to help out along the way.

*With faith in God,  
peace in Christ,  
and the guidance of the Spirit,  
Pastor Bill Vincent*

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## *Worshiping and serving God, loving, and accepting all*

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### **Online Worship Opportunities during Vacation and Moving**

Pastor Bill will be on Vacation **Sunday, September 5<sup>th</sup>**. We recommend you check out the following for online worship opportunities (in lieu of our own in-person worship):

St Mark's Presbyterian Church, Ballwin MO  
[www.discoverstmark.org](http://www.discoverstmark.org)  
 Click on Livestream Worship Services – 10:00 am

Southminster Presbyterian Church, Crestwood MO  
[www.southminsterstlouis.org](http://www.southminsterstlouis.org)  
 Scroll down to This Week's Service – 10:00 am

John Knox Presbyterian Church, Florissant MO  
 Worship at 9:30 am - Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/JohnKnoxPresbyterianChurchFlorissantMO/>

Pastor Bill will also be on vacation **Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>** (finally moving to the new house!). The same online opportunities will apply for worship that day.



## **CROP Hunger Walk Sunday, October 10, 2021**

Zion United Church of Christ in Union

Registration at 12:30. The Walk begins at 1 p.m.

If you can't be at the Walk but would like to donate, checks should be made out to CWS - CROP and given to Dorothy Clarkson at church or mailed to the church c/o Dorothy.

One fourth of the funds raised will be divided between the Union Food Pantry and the Harvest Table at St. Peters in Washington.

Three fourths of the funds will be donated to hunger and safe water projects round the world.

There will be a CROP "Rockathon" at Fricks Market Saturday, October 2 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## **The Peace & Global Witness offering**

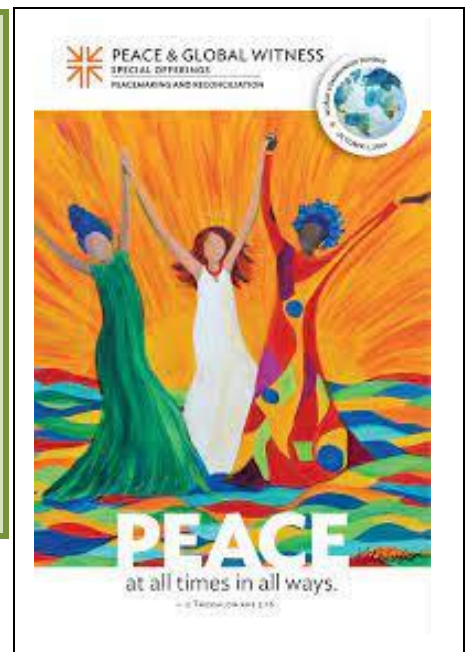
Sept. 5 - Oct. 3 culminating on World Communion Sunday.

25% of offering stays with local congregations

25% with mid councils

50% supports the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

Watch your email for more information on the The Peace & Global Witness offering.



### **A reminder:**

Prayer concerns can be shared with me via email or phone before worship (preferably by Saturday evening); or you can write them down (legibly, please) on a piece of paper and place them in the basket that will be located near the entrance to the sanctuary.

Pastor Bill

Sunday Worship service will be Streaming live on Facebook on Sunday at 9:00 am. (Make note of the dates listed on page 2, there will be no in person worship or live steaming those dates) The bulletin will also be available on Facebook and the church website ([www.unionfirstpresby.org](http://www.unionfirstpresby.org)), posted by 8 am Sunday morning.

Link to Facebook: [www.Facebook.com@firstpresbyterianchurchunion](https://www.Facebook.com@firstpresbyterianchurchunion)

Bulletin can be found here: <http://www.unionfirstpresby.org/church-bulletins/>