

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

15th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In this place, we gather to turn our hearts and minds to God.
All: **We rejoice that the Triune God meets us here.**
One: We gather this day to hear the Word of God...
All: **...to offer prayers and sing songs of praise.**
One: We gather this day, to acknowledge wonder and mystery.
All: **We gather this day to worship God!**

***OPENING HYMN** “O God, in a Mysterious Way” GtG 30

1. **O God, in a mysterious way
great wonders you perform.
You plant your footsteps in the sea
and ride upon the storm.**
2. **Deep in unfathomable mines
of never-failing skill,
you treasure up your bright designs
and work your sovereign will.**
3. **O fearful saints, fresh courage take.
The clouds you so much dread
are big with mercy and shall break
in blessings on your head.**
4. **Our unbelief is sure to err
and scan your work in vain.
You are your own interpreter,
and you will make it plain.**

Words: William Cowper, 1773, alt. Music: DUNDEE,
Scottish Psalter, 1615 *Public Domain*.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All-knowing God, we know you understand us more deeply than we understand ourselves. You know how much the cares of this life weigh us down. Our thoughts and actions are often very shortsighted. We take so much for granted, failing to value the wonder of life all around us, the gift of family and friends, the amazing reality of your Spirit dwelling in us. Open all the hidden places of our lives to the light of your forgiving love, that we might be set free from our sin and nurtured in our trust in your love and our joy in your service. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: The God of hosts has shown love for all people...
All: **...even when we have acted as enemies of one another and of our Creator.**
One: While we still were sinners...
All: **...Christ died for us.**
One: While we were rebelling...
All: **...Christ was reconciling.**
One: While we were focusing on fragments...
All: **...Christ was making whole.**
One: Rejoice in all the gifts we receive from God's hand, for we are a forgiven and forgiving people.
All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 25:20-28

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "Rebekah's World ... and Ours" by Pastor Bill Vincent

***HYMN** “For All the Faithful Women” GtG 324

- 1. For all the faithful women
who served in days of old,
to you shall thanks be given;
to all, their story told.
They served with strength and gladness
in tasks your wisdom gave.
To you their lives bore witness,
proclaimed your power to save.**
- 2. We praise your name for Miriam,
who sang triumphantly
while Pharaoh’s vaunted army
lay drowned beneath the sea;
for Ruth, who left her homeland
and ventured forth in faith,
who pledged to serve and worship
Naomi’s God till death.**
- 3. We sing of busy Martha,
who toiled with pot and pan
while Mary sat in silence
to hear the word again.
We praise the other Mary,
who hastened to the tomb
and found her Lord arisen,
dispelling doubt and gloom.**
- 4. Lord, hear our praise of Dorcas,
who served the sick and poor.
Her hands were cups of kindness,
her heart an open door.
O God, for saints and servants,
our fervent prayer we raise,
that, faithful in your service,
our lives may sing your praise.**

*For All the Faithful Women, Text by Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr.
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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The same Spirit
who inspired the prophets and apostles
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.
In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

(from A Brief Statement of Faith, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Confessions)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: Gracious God...
All: ...hear our prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Contemporary)

**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.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Gracious Creator,
you have laced our lives with blessing.
As we share our offerings,
we also tender our lives.
Make us your bold and faithful people,
willing to go forward in faith
wherever you would lead us,
that we might be a blessing in the world.
We pray in the name of Jesus,
by the gift of your empowering Spirit. Amen.**

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “Will You Come and Follow Me” (The Summons) GtG 726

1. **“Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown;
will you let my name be known;
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?”**
2. **“Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?”**
3. **“Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean,
and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?”**
4. **“Will you love the ‘you’ you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?”**

(continued...)

5. **Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...**Amen.**

POSTLUDE

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