

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**20<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Come, to give thanks and sing God's praise.  
All: **Come, to hear God's voice and grow in God's way.**  
One: Come, in anticipation and eagerness.  
All: **We come to worship the Lord our God.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" GtG 475

1. **Come, thou Fount of every blessing;  
tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
sung by flaming tongues above;  
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,  
mount of God's unchanging love!**
2. **Here I raise my Ebenezer;  
hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
wandering from the fold of God;  
he, to rescue me from danger,  
interposed his precious blood.**
3. **O to grace how great a debtor  
daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter,  
bind my wandering heart to thee.**

*(continued...)*

**Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
prone to leave the God I love;  
here's my heart; O take and seal it;  
seal it for thy courts above.**

Words: Robert Robinson, 1758, alt.

Music: NETTLETON, Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, 1813  
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## **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Dear God,  
you are the source of all good things,  
yet we squander those blessings.  
We hoard them,  
holding on to them as our very own.  
We do not share as you have shared with us,  
and so your grace is not evident in our lives.  
Forgive us, merciful God.  
Open our lives to your giving.  
Transform us as your people.  
And help us to love as you have loved us  
that our lives may testify  
to your abounding grace  
though Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## **SILENT CONFESSION**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON** *(from Psalm 103)*

One: The love of God is from forever to always, sure and never-failing.  
All: **“The Lord is merciful and loving, slow to become angry and full of constant love.”**  
One: “God does not keep on rebuking and is not angry forever.”  
All: **“The Lord does not punish us as we deserve or repay us for our sins and wrongs.”**  
One: “As high as the sky is above the earth, so great is God’s love for those who have reverence for God.”  
All: **“As far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove our sins from us.”**  
One: So rejoice and sing of God’s love and glory!  
All: **For in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

## 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** Matthew 15:21-28

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON** “Pry Open” by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” GtG 435

1. **There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea.  
There's a kindness in God's justice,  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heaven.  
There is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment given.**
2. **For the love of God is broader  
than the measures of the mind.  
And the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful,  
we would gladly trust God's Word,  
and our lives reflect thanksgiving  
for the goodness of our Lord.**

Words: Frederick William Faber, 1854, alt.

Music: IN BABILONE, Dutch melody; arr. Julius Rontgen, ca. 1906

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**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from "A Declaration of Faith")

**God created human beings with a need for community  
and with freedom to enter into it  
by responding to their Maker with grateful obedience  
and to one another with love and helpfulness.**

**We believe God sends us  
to risk our own peace and comfort  
in compassion for our neighbors.**

**We are to give to them and receive from them,  
accepting everyone we meet as a person;  
to be sensitive to those who suffer in body or mind;  
to help and accept help  
in ways that affirm dignity and responsibility.**

**We must not limit our compassion to those we judge deserving,  
for we ourselves do not deserve the compassion of God.**

**We do not fully comprehend who God is or how God works.  
God's reality far exceeds all our words can say.  
The Lord's requirements are not always what we think is best.  
The Lord's care for us is not always what we want.  
God comes to us on God's own terms  
and is able to do far more than we ask or think.**

"A Declaration of Faith" is Copyright 1977, 1991, the Office of the General Assembly,  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); adopted (1977) "as a contemporary statement of faith, a  
reliable aid for Christian study, liturgy, and inspiration, with the clear understanding that"  
it is not approved as a part of the *Book of Confessions*.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**One:** Loving God...  
**All:** ...hear our prayer.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (Traditional)

(next page...)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Gracious Lord, you have given us more mercy  
than we could imagine  
and more blessings than we deserve.  
Receive now these gifts as tokens of our gratitude to you,  
that your mercy may be multiplied  
and your blessings abound  
to embrace all those in need. Amen.**

## **SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** “Open My Eyes, That I May See” GtG 451

**1. Open my eyes, that I may see  
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.  
Place in my hands the wonderful key  
that shall unclasp and set me free.  
Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my eyes; illumine me, Spirit divine!**

*(continued...)*

2. **Open my ears, that I may hear  
voices of truth thou sendest clear.  
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,  
everything false will disappear.  
Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my ears; illumine me, Spirit divine!**

3. **Open my mouth, and let me bear  
gladly the warm truth everywhere.  
Open my heart, and let me prepare  
love with thy children thus to share.  
Silently now I wait for thee,  
ready, my God, thy will to see.  
Open my heart; illumine me, Spirit divine!**

Words and Music (OPEN MY EYES): Clara H. Scott, 1895  
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#### **\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

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

#### **POSTLUDE**

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