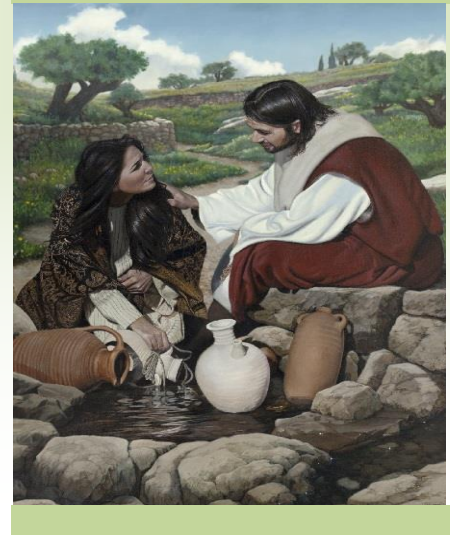




Message from Pastor Bill Vincent



Yes, I confess: I'm watching! Watching them swim and bike, volley and parry, score on goal and shoot the hoops.

I'm watching the Olympics.

It is an amazing display of skill and stamina, grit and guts, expertise and experience.

And I am fascinated.

The practice it takes to hone the skills and 'program' the muscle memory. The focus it takes to stick with the program and follow through – despite falls and setbacks. The grief shared and the joy displayed, and the camaraderie with others, even 'opponents'.

Is there a lesson (or two?) here to be learned?

"Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." (Hebrews 12:1)

Not the 'rat race' in which we are all-too-inclined to participate, but the 'race' of love and life: life and faithfulness in our love of God and love toward neighbor.

And it takes work and effort. It takes practice to hone the skills and (spiritual) disciplines to enable us to 'walk the walk and talk the talk' and live the life God calls us to: the way Christ walks before us (and with us).

It takes focus and faithfulness to the goal and to the steps it takes to follow through and follow up...and follow Christ.

And it takes that camaraderie that *"rejoices with those who rejoice and weeps with those who weep"* (Romans 12:15) as we all, at one time or another, mourn our failures and rejoice in our faithful efforts, and support and encourage one another through it all in this life of faith and life together.

So cheer them on...and cheer one another on.

Sympathize with those who fall short of their goal...and sympathize with one another as we stumble and fall – and get back up to try and try again.

Christ has blazed the trail before us.
God is there to help us along the way.
And we do not go it alone, but together.

*Peace in Christ,
Bill Vincent*

WORSHIP NOTES:

We continue on Sunday mornings our sermon series on the Gospel of Mark.

Sunday, August 4th - Mark 6:30-44

Sunday, August 11th - Mark 4:35-41 and 6:45-56

Sunday, August 18th - Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

Sunday, August 25th - Mark 7:24-37

Presbyterian Women:

The next meeting of Presbyterian Women will be held on Friday, August 23 at the home of Karen Calvin with Joan DuNard serving as Co-Hostess. The meeting will be at 9:00 A.M. The Bible Study will be Lesson 9 led by Deanna Vincent. Karen Calvin's address is 1304 Running Creek Court, Washington, MO 63090.

We will carpool from Church leaving there at 8:30 A.M. All women are invited to attend.

The Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering will be held in St Louis August 8-11. Deanna Vincent will be live streaming the 4 plenary sessions and Sunday morning worship service at her home, 1101 West 5th Street, Washington MO. ALL WOMEN, and men, are invited to join her! See the attached schedule for a description of each session and the viewing times. Please let her know if you're coming, 636-667-0342 OR vincentdeanna83@gmail.com.

Also: There is still time to donate gift cards to two non-profits that are being featured at the Gathering. Bethel Hills in Dutzow (a supportive, caring home for those with or without disabilities) and Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services will be given donated gift cards from Walmart, Lowes, Amazon and Target. Carol Gruber will be attending in person beginning August 7. There is still time to purchase gift cards and give them to Carol, who will take them to the Gathering.

Worshiping and serving God, loving, and accepting all



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. The bulletin will also be available on Facebook and the church website (www.unionfirstpresby.org), posted by 8 am Sunday morning.

Link to Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/firstPresbyterianChurchUnion/>

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