



First
Presbyterian
Church of Monroe

1820 to 2020

Celebrating
200 Years
of Faith
&
Service



September 13, 2020

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The mission of the First Presbyterian Church is to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ and to proclaim his salvation in worship, education, and outreach.

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

OPENING WORDS

Welcome to this house of worship!

Built on two hundred years of faithful people coming together.

We set aside our individual lives to come together as a community.

We offer our thanksgiving, grateful to be together to worship God in response to God's love and grace for us.

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

God has created each of us in God's image.

We are reflections of God who knows everything about us.

We are called, with all our challenges and imperfections, into relationship with God and each other, as God's beloved people.

We offer ourselves as servants, with joy and humility.

Let us worship and celebrate our Lord.

Hallelujah!

OPENING HYMN #300

“We Are One in the Spirit”

vss. 1, 2, 4

1 We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord; we are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

Refrain

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love; yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

2 We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand; we will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand, and together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:

Refrain

3 We will work with each other; we will work side by side; we will work with each other; we will work side by side, and we'll guard human dignity and save human pride:

Refrain

CALL TO CONFESSION

Our loving Creator God knows us and loves us as we are and continues to reach out to us as God's beloved people. As we rest in God's love, let us confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving and gracious God, there is so much to confess for daily we make choices and act in ways which disrespect ourselves, others, and your created world. We feel so right in our opinions that we fail to really listen to those who may disagree. We want to take sides, failing to notice that others may have different life experiences, giving them a perspective which we do not have. We forget that we are each pieces of your larger puzzle and no mere human has the entire story.

Forgive us for the times we make our own lives more important than the witness of your son, Jesus, the Christ, our Savior. Help us to listen and reflect, acknowledging with respect the experiences of others. Help us to speak the truth in love as Jesus did. Renew in us a call to be your beloved people, welcoming the call to share your message of justice, reconciliation, and peace.

SILENT CONFESSION

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ lived for us, died for us, was raised and intercedes for us. Nothing can separate us from the love and grace of God. Friends, believe the Good News. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, we are forgiven.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

SONG OF AFFIRMATION #581 “Glory Be to the Father”

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.

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Creator God, open our hearts and minds to hear your word for our lives. May it light anew the Spirit of Wisdom within us. **Amen.**

FIRST READING — Genesis 50:15-21

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING — Matthew 18:21-35

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON:

“Forgiveness”

Debra Davies

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH—The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN #753

“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”

vss. 1-4

Aka: Prayer of St. Francis

200th Birthday Celebration Historical Hymn

This familiar hymn is known by several similar titles. Although the author of the text is anonymous, it is often attributed to Italian, Saint Francis of Assisi (c. 1182-1226). Even so, it has been traced only to 1912 and may have been written and published in a French spiritual magazine by Father Esther Bouquerel. The tune we use was composed by Sebastian Temple in 1967. This prayer is appealing to diverse faiths as it encourages service to others. It has been referenced in speeches by many world leaders. Additionally, the prayer is recognized in various books and films. The emphasis of the prayer encourages a channel toward peace and reconciliation based on love, faith, hope, and joy. It was a prolific source of comfort and peace during WWI and WWII.

- 1 Make me a channel of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me bring your love. Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and where there’s doubt, true faith in you.
- 2 Make me a channel of your peace. Where there’s despair in life, let me bring hope. Where there is darkness, only light, and where there’s sadness, ever joy.
- 3 O, Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.
- 4 Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, in giving of ourselves that we receive, and in dying that we’re born to eternal life.

CALL TO OFFERING

Please reflect on the blessings God has given you and how you might reach out.

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Loving God, we experience your bountiful love in so many ways. We pledge these tokens of our love and gratitude to your service and ask that they be multiplied in your ministry throughout the world to bring justice and peace. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(Pray for those who are ill and all health care workers and those in essential jobs serving us. Pray for our congregation now separated. Pray for our country's leaders as they make tough decisions. Pray for our world.)*

LORD'S PRAYER

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

HYMN #761 "Called as Partners in Christ's Service" vss. 1, 2, 4

- 1 Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace, we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace. May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend, equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.
- 2 Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth, let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth. Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old, blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.
- 4 So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife. Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase, messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Today is a new day, full of blessings and hope. Seize the day with grateful rejoicing and share God's love with all you encounter. Speak the truth in love, listening with grace. Offer sincere forgiveness as often as you can. Stand with all God's children for justice, reconciliation and peace. May the blessing of God, the Creator; the grace of Jesus, the Redeemer; and the comfort and love of the Spirit, the Sustainer, go with all of us as we leave this service. **Amen.**

Ushers: Kim Hooper and George Kostoff

About our Guest Speaker this Sunday!

Debra Davies, M.Div., is a graduate of San Francisco Theological Seminary (1998). She is a Ruling Elder of 40 years, having served four different congregations in that role as well as Clerk of Session in two congregations. She has long been involved in ecumenical activities, visited churches on three continents, and values the diversity of people of faith across Christian and non-Christian denominations and traditions.