

August 16, 2020
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR MEDITATION

Genesis 45:1-15
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

Psalm 133
Matthew 15(10-20) 21-28

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"Let every living, breathing creature praise God! Hallelujah!"
Psalm 150:6

The Church Gathers To...

Welcome and Announcements

Rev Mark Galbraith

Preparation for Worship

Worshippers are invited to meditate silently during the following prelude.

Prelude

"Sarabande" from Cello Suite No. 1

J.S. Bach

Praise Almighty God

Call to Worship

- L: Come and worship, proclaim God's ways of faithfulness and steadfast love.
C: **We will tell of God's love, which unfolds in our lives.**
L: Come and worship, for we are God's people, rejoicing in his graciousness.
C: **God is always with us, there is nothing which can keep us apart.**
L: Come to the One who tells stories; worship our God who keeps promises.
All: **We rejoice with God who is with us always.**

Hymn

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

ST. ANNE

Children's Message

Sarah Greim

Confess to a Forgiving Creator

Call to Confession - Sing "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" one time.

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing. Lord, send your Spir-it in this place.

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

Call to Reconciliation

- L: It is not our past which keeps us from God, for that is behind us.
C: **It is not our present, for God is with us on this day.**
L: And our future is held tight in God's hands. It is true - there is absolutely nothing which can separate us from God.
C: **Whatever sins we have committed, God's forgiveness and love take them away forever.**
L: Join me as we pray together, saying,

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

All: What can we say about our foolish lives, God of Love? Too often, we choose to worship power when we could serve others in humility. We toss and turn at night, all those things over which we have no control keeping us wide awake, when we could turn them over to you. No matter how many times we hear the news that death has lost its power over us, we dread that day and try everything we can to postpone it.

For believing that our sins are more powerful than your mercy, forgive us, Grace of the world. You cast out your net of grace so that all might be gathered into your kingdom. Your Spirit carries the whispers of our hearts to you, and we are embraced with your hope, blessed with your love through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Following the Prayer of Confession, please sing "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" one time.

Assurance of Pardon

- L: Who has the right to judge us? Only Christ. Yet Christ died for us, Christ was raised for us, Christ reigns in power over us - Christ even prays for us!
C: **This is the love which binds us to God forever. There is nothing in this world, or beyond, which will keep us from being God's children. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Listen for God's Word

Scripture Readings

Psalm 150

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Respond to God's Word

Hymn

Will You Come and Follow Me

THE SUMMONS

Affirmation of Faith

Apostles' Creed

One: God has made us God's people through baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope we confess our faith:

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise...

The Lord's Prayer

Offering Our Gifts and Lives to God

In the gift of money, we offer something of our work and selves to God.

To donate, please visit the church website, fpcdavenport.org, and click on "Donate Now," use the link: <https://bit.ly/2V8nEgm>, or mail your check in to the church office

Amazing Grace

Arr. Alex Gilson

Tenor: Dave Edwards, Cello: Alex Gilson, Piano: Matt Bishop

Presentation of Our Gifts and Lives to God

Please sing the Doxology - Hymn Tune: Old Hundredth

Prayer of Dedication

Leader: Together let us pray:

People: We offer our gifts to you, Steadfast Love, not because you need them, but so others might be as blessed as we are by your presence, your power, and your peace. Amen.

Go To Serve With God's Blessing

Charge and Blessing

Postlude

Toccata in D minor, BWV 538

J.S. Bach

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Death: Don Hultgren, August 5, 2020

Prayers are Welcome for: Carlen Brinser; Nancy Buening (*mother of Rebecca Buening-Ferris*); Colleen Dueñas (*death of mother*); family of Nancy Hoffman; Family of Don Hultgren; Jolene Keeney; Betty Nelson (*mother of Tim Nelson*); Phil Schwister; Florabelle Smith (*mother of Jim Smith*); Wilton Retirement Community; families and victims of abuse, addiction, violence, loss, suicide, COVID-19, and all recent natural disasters.

A Letter from Pastor Mark

God's beloved people at First Presbyterian Church:

I am announcing that the way has been made clear for me to accept a new call to serve as interim pastor out west closer to home. Given the needs of FPC-D that have surfaced during our time together, I am in full support of the call for a bridging pastor to assist FPC-D with next steps towards reconciliation and healing in this interim and transitional journey. This announcement thus serves as my 30 day notice, per contract agreement.

My last Sunday with you will be Sunday, September 6.

It has been my pleasure to partner with you as Interim Pastor, Head of Staff, and Moderator of the Session.

I am pleased with all we've accomplished in our time together. The "Divine Drama overview of the Bible and Christian teaching" class was highly successful, with faithful attendance. The Personnel Committee defined and sharpened its identity and tasks, as well as established a staff review process. The mission study groups were well attended, highly positive, and broadly-stated mission goals for the next chapter of ministry were articulated and presented.

I was very happy to see that much needed beachheads in reestablishing a positive relationship between the congregation and Presbytery have begun. The groundwork for a much-needed reconciliation process was laid. We negotiated through staff re-organization and staff stability was re-established.

You have been through a very difficult and challenging time, but already you are on the road towards reconciliation and healing. I'm confident that as the Presbytery Of East Iowa, your bridging pastor, the Session, the staff, and of course, you the great and holy people of FPC-D, join hands together, you will be successful into preparing yourselves to be in the best position of strength and health to interview for your next called and installed lead pastor and head of staff.

I wish to thank first of all the staff for their collegiality, support, and teamwork. Thanks also of course to the Session leadership and deacons, and the congregation for your love, care support, and prayers.

The Presbytery and I have already been in conversation about additional short term pastoral help until you have called and installed your bridging pastor. The Presbytery will continue to work aggressively with your session to help fill the short term need.

Please know that you'll continue to be in my prayers. Please keep me in yours as well.

The grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ, the love of God, and the communion of God's Ever-Active Presence be with you all.

Respectfully and with Thanksgiving,

Mark Galbraith

Interim Pastor, Head of Staff and Moderator of the Session

Pastoral Statement

Dear Partners in Ministry at First Presbyterian Church:

For your convenience and review, here is a statement from Dr. Rebecca Blair, Stated Clerk of the PEI, following up from the Congregational Meeting July 26:

What is a Bridging Pastor?

The bridging pastor process allows carefully selected pastors and churches to be matched through the partnership

of the Ministers and Congregations Commission and a special search committee working on behalf of the church. The Bridging Pastor is an experienced pastor with a particular skill set, contracted in a Temporary Pastoral Relationship, who serves in complex or conflicted transitional ministry settings. This pastor's role is to serve as a bridge following the early phase of the interim process in which conflicts and church cultural features are identified and engaged by an interim pastor and the church session, and working through the later phase of the interim process that focuses on systemic renewal and relational reconciliation. The aim of this service is to complete the preparation process for the congregation to call an installed pastor.

In accord with the PEIA policy on Temporary Pastoral Relationships, the Bridging Pastor relationship shall be established by contract between the session of the church to be served and the pastor, as full-time pastoral service, reviewed on a yearly basis by the session in partnership with the MCC with the contract to be approved by the MCC before the contract becomes effective.

What is the Process to Call a Bridging Pastor?

The process for selecting a Bridging Pastor begins with the selection of a Bridging Pastor Search Committee for the specific task of selecting a Bridging Pastor only. The Presbytery's Ministers and Congregations Commission provides guidance to the Bridging Pastor Search Committee concerning the essential skill set of the Bridging Pastor articulated in the documentation to be shared with potential candidates. The MCC and the Bridging Pastor Search Committee partner to carefully consider 2-3 candidates whom the MCC has identified. Only these candidates may be considered.

In choosing to use the Bridging Pastor option, the session is agreeing to select one of the candidates offered by the Presbytery's MCC. Once established, this relationship will be reviewed by the MCC for renewal annually to ensure that the agreed-upon activities are taking place, the ministry is benefitting the church, and the terms of contract are agreed upon.

Temporary Pastoral Relationships are defined by G-2.0504b and c in the Book of Order. These relationships shall be established by contract between the session of the church to be served and the pastor for one-year increments and shall be approved by MCC on behalf of the Presbytery before such contracts become effective. Any extension of such contract may be entered into by the session and the pastor and shall be approved by MCC before becoming effective. Such approval shall not be granted by MCC until after an acceptable review of the ministry is conducted.

*In Partnership,
Pastor Mark*

View the Special Congregational Meeting, "The Way Forward"

The recording of the July 26 congregational meeting, as well as more information about the pastor we are hoping to call, can be found on our church website: click <https://www.fpcdavenport.org/sermon-videos/> and check out the "Moving Forward" section. Recordings of future meetings will be posted here as well.

Sunday Sermon Series:

During Sunday worship, August 16, 23, 30 and Sept. 6, Pastor Mark will present a sermon series "The 5 Purposes of the Church." Based on Dr. Rick Warren's *The Purpose-Driven Church*, the 5 purposes of the Church, i.e., **worship, evangelism, learning, fellowship and service** will be explored. This teaching sermon series is a follow-up and expansion of the Mission Study PowerPoint presentation.

Mission Study PowerPoint presentation available online

On Sunday, August 9, during the ACE Education hour, Pastor Mark presented a PowerPoint highlight reel of the Mission Study Small Groups. A video recording of the presentation is available for review or first-time viewing on FPC website and Facebook page. Please note, that due to technical glitches that occurred during the presentation, some of the introductory slides were not seen. Pastor Mark re-recorded the intro segment, and it was edited on the rest of what was presented. Any further questions or discussion may be directed to Pastor Mark!

A Note from the Pandemic Task Force

Last month, the church sent to every household in our congregation the Reopening Plan drafted by the Pandemic Task Force and approved by the Session. In line with our duties as outlined by the Session, the task force has continued to meet weekly and reevaluate our policy in light of the ever-changing situation of the COVID pandemic in our community. Around the same time as that plan was sent, cases in the Quad Cities area began surging; this surge prompted the task force to reconsider our stated conditions for entering Stage 2 (“Consistently <1 death per day for 3 consecutive weeks”).

We realized that the formula for determining various stages works well when numbers do what they are supposed to: gradually decrease. But basing a reopening on the death count alone fails to take into account a resurgence. Under the current formula, it is possible to open the church for worship in the middle of a surge because we technically would not see the resulting deaths from that surge for a few weeks after; considering that the surge began with a younger population, it is likely that the deaths would not occur for several weeks after we reopen, which would prompt us to close again. The task force believes that it would appear reckless to reopen when numbers are rising and ICU beds are scarce. To account for this surge in numbers, the task force proposed to Session last week that the policy be amended such that the conditions for entering Stage 2 would read, “Consistently <5 cases and <1 death per day for 3 consecutive weeks.” This measure was approved by the Session. The idea is that we reopen in Stage 2 when deaths cease (which is a good marker for gauging the situation with ICU bed availability) and numbers drop significantly; if this is maintained for three weeks, we can move comfortably into Stage 3.

All the members of the Pandemic Task Force are eager to worship again in our beautiful sanctuary. Please know that our priority since forming in April has been to keep our congregation safe. This has been and continues to be our guiding value, and we thank you for your ongoing support of the many great ministries of FPC during this time.

Highlights from the July Session Meeting

With Session approval, FPC is now a member of QC Interfaith and has representatives attending meetings.

The Re-opening Policy was amended to account for the current situation in Scott County where Covid-related deaths are low but case numbers are increasing significantly. Case numbers will now be part of the criteria for entering Stage 2.

Giving to the general fund is down considerably since the pandemic started. Please, everyone is encouraged to keep up your giving.

The Session received a report from Dr. Rebecca Blair, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of East Iowa on the Administrative Review Committee of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and on the status of the Bridging Pastor. Details were presented at the congregational meeting on July 26, 2020.

A specially-called congregational meeting was approved for August 23, 2020. The purpose will be to elect a Bridging Pastor search committee and approve changes in the call of Pastor Katie Styr.

Approved the PAS Program for 2020-2021 which is scheduled to begin in March 2021. Details to follow.

Received a report from the Tech Task Force that new video equipment is needed to replace some failed parts. Work is being done to allow for live streaming.

The Worship Task Force ended their service after 2 years. A final report was given to Session.

Special Congregational Meeting - Sunday, August 23, 10:30 AM

On motion, The Session has scheduled a special congregational meeting, Sunday, August 23, 2020, at 10:30 AM, immediately following the worship service. Paper ballots will be mailed to each household. Docket items are:

Approval of Bridging Pastor Nominating Committee

Approval of Pastor Katie's change in terms of call (job description will be sent via e-news or mailed at request)

Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81957838067?pwd=ZHhRQytiaDJQlZlejJRSFA2S1BJZz0>

Meeting ID: 819 5783 8067

Passcode: 740831

Dial-in Number: 312-626-6799

Join Us for These Weekly Events Online!

For more information, see the e-news, church website or Facebook:

Worship Watch Party - Sundays, 9:30 AM

Virtual Coffee Hour - Sundays, immediately following Worship Watch Party

Stump the Organist! – Every other Friday, 12:00 PM

Adult Christian Education in August – Sundays, August 16, 23, 30 10:45AM

Join us on Sunday, August 16th, at 10:45 AM for our discussion of the Week 1 lessons in the 21-day Racial Justice Challenge. You can find the daily lessons on the e-news or Facebook. Even if you haven't had a chance to do the first week's lessons, you can still join us for our discussion on Sunday and then join us for the Week 2 and Week 3 lessons. We will meet again on Sundays August 23 and August 30.

Here is the link for the Zoom call: [https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUkf-ivrzMqHdSy9GSdaXqVT0NeUC6eLM-9](https://zoom.us/join/https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUkf-ivrzMqHdSy9GSdaXqVT0NeUC6eLM-9). You can also join the call by entering the Meeting ID (919 8171 8070) and password (ACE).

Class materials will be available in the E-news.

Online Harpsichord Recital - Tuesday, August 18, 12:00 PM

Matt Bishop will offer a free online harpsichord recital on Facebook on Tuesday, August 18 at noon. This will be a 30-minute recital featuring works by Henry Purcell and Louis-Claude Daquin on the church's Lindholm harpsichord. The video will be available on the church's Facebook page. Enjoy some Baroque music with your lunch!

Bible Basics 201: Romans – Wednesdays, 6:15 PM

Paul's letter to the Romans is an in-depth example of the early church's struggles with religious tradition and civil authority. As always, anyone is welcome to join us! We'll meet from 6:15-7:15 PM on Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/98965381440?pwd=TUdyMXltRTMrRXdFWnBEZ0NEKzBYUT09>.

If you'd like to call in, you can call 312-626-6799 and enter 989 6538 1440 for the ID and 240979 for the password.

August 19: Romans 5-8

August 26: Romans 9-12

September 2: Romans 13-16

Attention Gardeners, or Those Who Want to Get Outside and Play in the Dirt!

The neighborhood garden is planted and needs weekly maintenance (weather providing). The Deacons are asking anyone to adopt a week – you can pick whenever in that week to weed or water if needed.

Weekly availability:

8/16 – 8/22

8/23 – 8/29

8/30 – 9/5

Please contact Debbie Keenan (815-621-8009; dkeenan0912@gmail.com) to get on the schedule! Thank you for your part in watching our garden grow to feed our community!

Christian Education for Youth (CEFY) Fall 2020

Teachers Needed

We are in need of adults to teach Sunday school, which begins on September 13. Teachers are scheduled at your convenience; every Sunday, twice a month, even once a month. We can use you! Don't care to teach regularly but

still want to help? Subs are needed as well. We will start the year with online classes and move to in- person when we can. If interested, please contact Paula Hartmann (ppelhartmann@aol.com.) You can also call the church office.

Sunday School Begins September 13!

Attention parents! Sunday School begins September 13! We will start online but hold in-person activities as allowed. We are currently ironing out a schedule to include the choirs. A registration form will be emailed to parents. Paper copies of the registration will be available in the church office. Please register your child so we know who to invite to the online meetings. Please check the Facebook page and weekly e-News for updates. Please contact Rev. Styrts or the church office if you have questions.