**Saginaw First Free Methodist Church**

**Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**August 29, 2021**



*“He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me;’” (Mark 7:6)*

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**Proper 17 (22)**

**August 29, 2021**

**Prelude**

**\*\*Greeting/Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship** (*spoken responsively*)

L: O LORD, who may abide in your tent?

**P: Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right**

L: Who may dwell on your holy hill?

**P: Those who speak the truth from their heart**

L: Keep the commandments of the LORD your God

**P: We will observe them diligently**

L: The words that Christ spoke are spirit and life

**P: Lord, You have the words of eternal life**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “Wonderful Words of Life” #692 (vv. 1-3)

**Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life**

**Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life**

**Words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**Christ, the blessed One, gives to all, Wonderful words of life**

**Sinner, list to the laving call, Wonderful words of life**

**All so freely given, wooing us to heaven**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**Sweetly echo the gospel call, Wonderful words of life**

**Offer pardon and peace to all, Wonderful words of life**

**Jesus, only Savior, sanctify forever**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**Beautiful words, wonderful words**

**Wonderful words of life**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: O God, Wisdom of the universe, you bear the pain of your people. Grant us the gift of wisdom, that we may discern your way and live justly and graciously amid the struggles of this world. Move us to praise your gracious will, for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death. Open for us the hidden ways of your love, as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples…

**P: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done in 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 Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**\*Gloria Patri**

**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.​**

**First Scripture Lesson:** Song of Solomon 2:8-13

 The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.

My beloved speaks and says to me: “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

**Prayer of Confession**

L: The Lord rejoices at the times when we act in God’s love. The Lord does not hold against us the times we ignore our call. Surrender to God’s will, so our spirits may grow calm, our vision be clear, and our purpose be unified…

**P:** **Although I often focus on desires that are not from you, O Lord, but you have never abandoned me. Even when I stubbornly look the other way, your hand of love is always outstretched towards me. Your gentle voice constantly calls me, even when I obstinately refuse to listen. When the sins in my soul are increasing, I lose the taste for virtuous things. Yet even at such moments, O Lord, you alone can restore my taste for virtue. There are so many false friends willing to encourage sin. But your friendship alone can give me the strength of mind to resist and defeat sin. What a good friend you are. Amen.**

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 45

**P: You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever. Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty. In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice; let your right hand achieve awesome deeds. Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.**

**Hymn of Affirmation:** “Create In Me a Clean Heart” 2x

**Create in me a clean heart, O God**

**And renew a right spirit within me**

**Create in me a clean heart, O God**

**And renew a right spirit within me**

**Cast me not away from Thy presence, O Lord**

**And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me**

**Restore unto me, the joy of Thy salvation**

**And renew a right spirit within me**

 **Second Scripture Lesson****:** James 1:17-27

 Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.

 Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.

 But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act--they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson**: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

 Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.)

 So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?”

 He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

 For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

**Sermon**

**Prayer of Response**

**Hymn of Response:** “Open My Eyes, That I May See” #461 (vv.1-4)

**Open my eyes, that I may see**

**Glimpses of truth you have for me**

**Place in my hands the wonderful key**

**That shall unlock and set me free**

**Silently now, on bended knee**

**Ready I wait your will to see**

**Open my eyes, illumine me**

**Spirit divine**

**Open my ears, that I may hear**

**Voices of truth Thou sendest clear**

**And while the wave-notes fall on my ear**

**Ev’rything false will disappear**

**Silently now, on bended knee**

**Ready I wait your will to see**

**Open my ears, illumine me**

**Spirit divine**

**Open my mouth and let me bear**

**Gladly the warm truth ev’rywhere**

**Open my heart and let me prepare**

**Love with Thy children thus to share**

**Silently now, on bended knee**

**Ready I wait your will to see**

**Open my mouth, illumine me**

**Spirit divine**

**Open my mind, that I may read**

**More of Thy love in word and deed**

**What shall I fear while yet Thou dost lead**

**Only for light from Thee I plead**

**Ready I wait your will to see**

**Open my mind, illumine me**

**Spirit divine**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:May ourreligion be pure and undefiled before God, the Father. Commit to keep oneself unstained by the world. Give to care for orphans and widows in their distress. Be doers of the Word, as we collect this morning’s tithes and offerings.

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow**

**Praise Him, all creatures here below**

**Praise Him above, ye heavenly host**

**Praise Father Son, and Holy Ghost.**

**Amen.**

**\*Prayer**

**\*Closing Hymn**: “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee” #552 (vv.1-4)

**O Master, let me walk with Thee**

**In lowly paths of service free**

**Tell me Thy secret, help me bear**

**The strain of toil, the fret of care**

**Help me the slow of heart to move**

**By some clear winning word of love**

**Teach me the wayward feet stay**

**And guide them in the homeward way**

**Teach me Thy patience still with Thee**

**In closer dearer company**

**In work that keeps faith sweet and strong**

**In trust that triumphs over wrong**

**In hope that sends a shining ray**

**Far down the future's broadening way**

**In peace that only Thou canst give**

**With Thee, O Master, let me live**

**\*Benediction**

L: May you gain faith and understanding in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to God’s own glory and excellence. May grace be multiplied in you, as you go in peace to love and serve. Amen.