**Saginaw First Free Methodist Church**

**Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**August 30, 2020**



*“When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then he said, ‘Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’” (Exodus 3:4-5)*

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**The mission of Saginaw First Free Methodist Church is to be faithful to God and to make known to all people everywhere God’s call to wholeness in Jesus Christ.**

**Prelude**

**Greeting/Announcements**

L:     Come! See that God is with us

**P:     God is always by your side**

L:     Learn what it means to be disciples of Jesus

**P:     We will hate evil and cling to what is good**

L:     Let Christ lead us into reconciliation with all the world

**P:     We will seek justice even for our enemies**

L:     Do not repay evil for evil, but leave vengeance to God

**P:     We will overcome evil with good and follow Christ to the cross**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” #74 (vv.1-3)

**I sing the mighty pow’r of God, that made the mountains rise**

**That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies**

**I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day**

**The moon shines full at His command, and all the stars obey**

**I sing the goodness of the Lord, who filled the earth with food**

**Who formed the creatures through the Word, and then pronounced them good**

**Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed, where’er I turn my eye**

**If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky**

**There’s not a plant or flow’r below, but makes Thy glories known**

**And clouds arise, and tempests blow, by order from Thy throne**

**While all that borrows life from Thee is ever in Thy care**

**And everywhere that man can be, Thou, God, art present there**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: Almighty God, source of all that exists, we gather to be reminded that you are always with us. We come to seek your strength, and be reminded of all you’ve done for this world. Remind us as we live our daily lives, that you are beside us. May we feel your Spirit fire ablaze within our souls, how Moses saw it beside him. May we be drawn to its love and follow its cross, as we pray together 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:** Exodus 3:1-15

 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.”

 When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

 Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

 He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

 Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

 The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

 He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

 But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”

 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

 God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’, This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations.

**Prayer of Confession**

L: We can know and understand that God is ever present in our lives. Yet we are often unhospitable to one another. We are told to bless those who persecute, and not to repay evil with evil. But we continually take vengeance into our own hands. Let us repent…

**P: God of mercy, God of grace, our Scriptures teach us to love our enemies, hold fast to what is good, and resist evil behavior. You are continually with us and the Spirit is our guide. But we are easily distracted by those desires of the flesh. We take retribution into our own hands, physically and verbally. We speak poorly of others behind their back, we use propaganda to make others distrust our perceived enemies. We lie, cheat, and steal to get what we want, regardless of your commandments and teachings. We persecute and curse instead of blessing others. We are too proud to humble ourselves and admit our sin. We compound our evil ways. Lord have mercy. Amen.**

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 105

**P: O give thanks to the LORD, call on God’s name, make known God’s deeds among the peoples. Sing to God, sing praises to God; tell of all God’s wonderful works. Glory in God’s holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Seek the LORD and God’s strength; seek God’s presence continually. Remember the wonderful works God has done, God’s miracles, and the judgments God uttered, O offspring of God’s servant Abraham, children of Jacob, God’s chosen ones.**

**\*Hymn of Affirmation: “**Lift High the Cross” #237 (vv.3-5)

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim**

**till all the world adore his sacred name**

**O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree**

**As Thou hast promised, draw men unto Thee**

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim**

**till all the world adore his sacred name**

**Set up Thy throne, that earth’s despair may cease**

**Beneath the shadow of its healing peace**

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim**

**till all the world adore his sacred name**

**For Thy blest cross which doth for all atone**

**Creation’s praises rise before Thy throne**

**New Testament Scripture Lesson**: Romans 12:9-21

 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good. Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

 Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

 No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.”

 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Special Music:** Micki Marin

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson**: Matthew 16:21-28

 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.”

 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life?

Or what will they give in return for their life? For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

**Sermon**

**Prayer of Response**

**Hymn of Response:** 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**

**Invitation of Offering**

L: God is a light to us, revealing the misery and oppression of others. God has given us a mission and resources to liberate those who are treated with an unequal yoke. Do not ignore the suffering of others, 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**: “Heavenly Sunlight” #375 (vv.1-2)

**Walking in sunlight all of my journey**

**Over the mountains, through the deep vale**

**Jesus has said, “I’ll never forsake thee,”**

**Promise divine that never can fail**

**Heavenly sunlight, heavenly sunlight**

**Flooding my soul with glory divine**

**Hallelujah, I am rejoicing**

**Singing His praises, Jesus is mine**

**Shadows around me, shadows above me**

**Never conceal my Savior and Guide**

**He is the light, in Him is no darkness**

**Ever I’m walking close to His side**

**Heavenly sunlight, heavenly sunlight**

**Flooding my soul with glory divine**

**Hallelujah, I am rejoicing**

**Singing His praises, Jesus is mine**

**Benediction**

L: The Spirit of God is a light blazing in the world, let your light shine before all the earth. Be genuine in your love, and gracious in your rebuke. Do not seek comfort but carry your cross, as you go in peace to love and serve. Amen.