**Saginaw First Free Methodist Church**

**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**October 4, 2020**



*“’Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.’” (Matthew 21:33)*

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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**

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

L: The heavens are telling the glory of God

**P: The firmament proclaims God’s handiwork**

L: The Creator is with us, teaching us to keep from sin

**P: The law of God is perfect, reviving the soul**

L: God’s decrees are steadfast, making the wise simple

**P: We will submit to God’s law with our loyal response**

L: May our words and deeds be acceptable to God

**P: May our awe before God be pure and enduring**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “How Great Thou Art” #33 (vv.1,3-4)

**O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder**

**Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made**

**I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder**

**Thy power throughout the universe displayed**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**And when I think of God, His Son not sparing**

**Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in**

**That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing**

**He bled and died to take away my sin**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation**

**And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart**

**Then I shall bow with humble adoration**

**And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee**

**How great Thou art, how great Thou art**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: O Lord our God, who rescued your people from Egypt, enlighten us with your wisdom. Remind us of your ordinances that lead to righteous living. May we be like creation, that declares your glory without words. Help us to be confident in you, and not our own flesh. Teach us the power of resurrected living, 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 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

 Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

 When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.”

 Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.”

**Prayer of Confession**

L: God has created us a kingdom to dwell in, full of resources for all. But at times we are poor stewards, and we deny resources to God’s other children. For all the times we submit to greed and selfishness, let us repent…

**P: God of life, you created a world for all people to live in peace and fellowship. Yet we often assume ownership and possession of the things we are only stewards of. We live as if the things you’ve entrusted to us are for us alone. We assume power over things we are to share. We are to use the resources of earth to care for our neighbors, yet we use them to manipulate and control those we can. Remind us that the law and commandments are to teach us to love you and our neighbor. Amen.**

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 19

**P: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God’s handiwork. The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Amen.**

**\*Hymn of Affirmation:** “I Need Thee Every Hour” #600 (1-2,4)

**I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord**

**No tender voice like thine, can peace afford**

**I need thee, O I need thee**

**Every hour I need thee!**

**O bless me now, my Savior**

**I come to thee**

**I need thee every hour, stay thou near by**

**Temptations lose their power, when thou art nigh**

**I Need thee, O I need thee**

**Every hour I need thee!**

**O bless me now, my Savior**

**I come to thee**

**I need thee every hour, most Holy One**

**O make me Thine indeed, Thou blessed Son**

**Need thee, O I need thee**

**Every hour I need thee!**

**O bless me now, my Savior**

**I come to thee**

**Second Scripture Lesson:** Philippians 3:4b-14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

 Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.

 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

 Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Communion**

**MINISTER: THE INVITATION**

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, who live in love and peace with

your neighbors and who intend to lead a new life, following the commandments

of God and walking in His holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy

sacrament to your comfort; and humbly kneeling, make your honest confession

to Almighty God.

**IN UNISON: THE GENERAL CONFESSION**

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all

people, we confess that we have sinned, and we are deeply grieved as we

remember the wickedness of our past lives. We have sinned against You, Your

holiness and Your love, and we deserve only Your indignation and anger.

We sincerely repent, and we are genuinely sorry for all wrongdoing and every

failure to do the things we should. Our hearts are grieved, and we acknowledge

that we are hopeless without Your grace.

Have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for the sake of your son, our Savior, Jesus

Christ, who died for us.

Forgive us.

Cleanse us.

Give us strength to serve and please You in newness of life and to honor and praise

Your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**MINISTER: THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

O Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who with great mercy has promised

forgiveness to all who turn to You with hearty repentance and true faith, have

mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from our sins, make us strong and faithful in

all goodness and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**CONGREGATION: THE COLLECT**Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom

no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of the

Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name,

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**MINISTER: THE SANCTUS**

It is always right and proper, and our moral duty, that we should at all times and

in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the inhabitants of heaven, we

honor and adore Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying,

**CONGREGATION: THE SANCTUS (CONTINUED)**

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts!

Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord, most high. Amen

**MINISTER: THE PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

We do not come to this Your table, O merciful Lord, with self-confidence and

pride, trusting in our own righteousness, but we trust in Your great and many

mercies. We are not worthy to gather the crumbs from under Your table. But You,

O Lord, are unchanging in Your mercy and Your nature is love; grant us, therefore,

God of mercy, God of grace, so to eat at this Your table that we may receive in

spirit and in truth the body of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, and the merits of His

shed blood, so that we may live and grow in His likeness and, being washed and

cleansed through His most precious blood, we may evermore live in Him and He

in us. Amen.

**MINISTER: THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS**

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who gave in love Your only Son, Jesus Christ,

to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who by His sacrifice, offered

once for all, did provide a full, perfect, and sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole world,

we come now to Your table in obedience to Your Son, Jesus Christ, who in His holy gospel

commanded us to continue a perpetual memory of His precious death until He comes

again. Hear us, O merciful Father, we humbly ask, and grant that we, receiving this bread and this cup,

as He commanded and in the memory of His passion and death, may partake of His most blessed body and blood.

In the night of His betrayal, Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to

His disciples, saying, “Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

In like manner, after supper He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink of

this, all of you, for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of

sins; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” Amen.

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting

life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed upon Him in your heart, by faith with

thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life.

Drink this in remembrance that Christ’s blood was shed for you and be thankful.

**MINISTER: THE BENEDICTION**

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love

of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and

the Holy Spirit, be yours now and forever. Amen.

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson**: Matthew 21:33-46

“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.

When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way.

Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’

So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

**Sermon**

**Prayer of Response**

**\*Hymn of Response:** “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee” #552 (vv.1-2,4)

**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**

**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**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:God has entrusted us with the vineyard, and there are resources to spare. What we do with bounty will test our desire. What will we do with what rightfully belongs to God? Share the fruit of God’s property, 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**

**\*Hymn**: “He Brought Me Out” #412 (vv.1-2,4)

**My heart was distressed ’neath Jehovah’s dread frown**

**And low in the pit where my sins dragged me down**

**I cried to the Lord from the deep miry clay**

**Who tenderly brought me out to golden day**

**He brought me out of the miry clay**

**He set my feet on the Rock to stay**

**He puts a song in my soul today**

**A song of praise, hallelujah**

**He placed me upon the strong Rock by His side**

**My steps were established and here I’ll abide**

**No danger of falling while here I remain**

**But stand by His grace until the crown I gain**

**He brought me out of the miry clay**

**He set my feet on the Rock to stay**

**He puts a song in my soul today**

**A song of praise, hallelujah**

**I’ll sing of His wonderful mercy to me**

**I’ll praise Him till all men His goodness shall see**

**I’ll sing of salvation at home and abroad**

**Till many shall hear the truth and trust in God**

**He brought me out of the miry clay**

**He set my feet on the Rock to stay**

**He puts a song in my soul today**

**A song of praise, hallelujah**

**\*Benediction**

L: God has rescued us and given us commandments. Live in awe of God, proclaiming God’s goodness to the world. The fruit you bear will be your testimony, let it be to God’s graciousness, because it’s of nothing you’ve done. Be giving tenants, as you go in peace to love and serve. Amen.