**Saginaw First Free Methodist Church**

**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**September 19, 2021**



*“But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, ‘Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.’"*

 *(Mark 9:34-35)*

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**Proper 20 (25)**

**September 19, 2021**

**Prelude**

**\*\*Greeting/Announcements**

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

L: God calls us to seek wisdom from above

**P: We long to hear God’s Word spoken to our hearts**

L: God’s bright and holy truth is to be our pathway

**P: We long to learn the ways of wisdom and righteousness**

L: A Spirit-filled life is God’s desire for us

**P: We long to live lives of holiness and light**

L: God grants God’s wisdom generously to all who ask

**P: Let us worship in wisdom and truth**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “His Name is Wonderful” #149 (vv. 1-2)

**His Name is Wonderful, His Name is Wonderful**

**His Name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord**

**He’s the Great Shepherd, The Rock of all Ages**

**Almighty God is He**

**Bow down before Him, Love and adore Him**

**His Name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord**

**He is the mighty King, Master of everything**

**His Name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord**

**He’s the Great Shepherd, The Rock of all Ages**

**Almighty God is He**

**Bow down before Him, Love and adore Him**

**His Name is Wonderful, Jesus my Lord**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: God of peace, give us strength and courage to get our priorities straight, help us to seek your kingdom first. Help us to live faithfully and joyfully in the world, and to be friends with the people you call us to serve. Help us also to remember that our best relationship is the one we have with you, 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:** Proverbs 31:10-31

 A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant, she brings her food from far away.

 She rises while it is still night and provides food for her household and tasks for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She girds herself with strength, and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night.

 She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid for her household when it snows, for all her household are clothed in crimson. She makes herself coverings; her clothing is fine linen and purple.

 Her husband is known in the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them; she supplies the merchant with sashes. Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

 She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her happy; her husband too, and he praises her: “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”

 Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her a share in the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the city gates.

**Prayer of Confession**

L: Our Creator and sustainer, we confess that we are not always strong like the trees planted by the water’s edge. Sometimes we are weak and indecisive. Seek restoration, so our spirits may grow calm, our vision be clear, and our purpose be unified…

**P:** **Teach me, O Lord, to be sweet and gentle in all the events of life; in disappointments, in the thoughtfulness of others, in the insincerity of those I trusted, in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. Let me put myself aside, to think of the happiness of others. Teach me to profit by the suffering that comes across my path. Let me use my suffering that it may strengthen me, not harden nor embitter me; that it may make me patient, not irritable, narrow, haughty and overbearing. May no one be less good for having come within my influence. No one less pure, less noble for having been a fellow traveler with me. May our life be lived in the supernatural, full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. Amen.**

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 1

**P: Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.**

**Hymn of Affirmation:** “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind” #472 (vv.1-4)

**Dear Lord and Father of mankind**

**Forgive our foolish ways**

**Reclothe us in our rightful mind**

**In purer lives thy service find**

**In deeper reverence, praise**

**In simple trust like theirs who heard**

**Beside the Syrian sea**

**The gracious calling of the Lord**

**Let us, like them without a word**

**Rise up and follow Thee**

**Drop Thy still dews of quietness**

**Till all our strivings cease**

**Take from our souls the strain and stress**

**And let our ordered lives confess**

**The beauty of Thy peace**

**Breathe through the heats of our desire**

**Thy coolness and thy balm**

**Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire**

**Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire**

**O still, small voice of calm**

 **Second Scripture Lesson****:** James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8

 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.

 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace. Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you?

 You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson**: Mark 9:30-37

 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”

 But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?”

 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”

 Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

**Guest Speaker:** Sandy Claypool

**Prayer of Response**

**Hymn of Response:** “Living for Jesus” #496 (vv.1-4)

**Living for Jesus, a life that is true**

**Striving to please Him in all that I do**

**Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free**

**This is the pathway of blessing for me**

**O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee**

**For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me**

**I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne**

**My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone**

**Living for Jesus Who died in my place**

**Bearing on Calv’ry my sin and disgrace**

**Such love constrains me to answer His call**

**Follow His leading and give Him my all**

**O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee**

**For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me**

**I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne**

**My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone**

**Living for Jesus, wherever I am**

**Doing each duty in His holy Name**

**Willing to suffer affliction and loss**

**Deeming each trial a part of my cross**

**O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee**

**For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me**

**I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne**

**My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone**

**Living for Jesus through earth’s little while**

**My dearest treasure, the light of His smile**

**Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem**

**Bringing the weary to find rest in Him**

**O Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee**

**For Thou, in Thy atonement, didst give Thyself for me**

**I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne**

**My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:The Holy Spirit guides us in the way to lives that bear the fruit that is pleasing to God; lives full of mercy and compassion. Be wise and just in how we live and steward the resources we keep. Sacrifice to God, 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**: “God of Grace and God of Glory” #720 (vv.1-4)

**God of grace and God of glory**

**On Thy people pour Thy power**

**Crown Thine ancient church's story**

**Bring her bud to glorious flower**

**Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage**

**For the facing of this hour**

**For the facing of this hour**

**Lo! the hosts of evil round us**

**Scorn Thy Christ, assail His ways!**

**Fears and doubts too long have bound us**

**Free our hearts to work and praise**

**Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage**

**For the living of these days**

**For the living of these days**

**Heal Thy people's warring madness**

**Bend our pride to Thy control**

**Shame our wanton, selfish gladness**

**Rich in things and poor in soul**

**Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage**

**Lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal**

**Lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal**

**Set our feet on lofty places**

**Gird our lives that they may be**

**Armoured with all Christlike graces**

**In the fight to set men free**

**Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage**

**That we fail not man nor Thee**

**That we fail not man nor Thee**

**\*Benediction**

L: Let the majesty of the Father be the light by which you walk, the compassion of the Son be the love by which you walk, the presence of the Spirit be the power by which you walk, as you go in peace to love and serve. Amen.