

Sunday, February 3, 2019

A couple of minutes prior to the start of the service, the liturgist will enter and take his/her seat on the Chancel. The Pastor and pastor will offer a short prayer with the choir, before entering and stepping into the pulpit, to welcome everyone and make announcements....

The preacher will then ask...

“Are there any other announcements or concerns of the church that need to be made known at this time?..... Thank you.

PRELUDE “In Christ There Is No East or West” –David P. Dahl **Dr. Elizabeth Davis**

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP “Rejoice in the Day!” –Dan Dykema **The Choir**

After the Choir is finished, the liturgist should step to the lectern and say,

“Would you join me in reading the responsive call to worship adapted from Psalm 65 and printed in our bulletins?”

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Psalm 65)

Praise awaits you, our God, in Zion; to you our vows will be fulfilled.

All people will come to you who answer prayer.

When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions.

Blessed are those you choose to live in your courts!

We are filled with the good things of your house.

We will sing your praises in the midst of your holy temple.

Let us worship God beginning with prayer....

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let us pray... Loving God, whose care extends to saints and sinners, pour out your Spirit upon us that we may truly make your Word a part of our lives. Open our hearts to trust your leading through times of difficulty and days of despair. Open our eyes and ears and hearts to recognize all people as our brothers and sisters, and to seek their well-being as diligently as we seek our own. Open our lips so that we may sing your praise with sincere delight. Grant that all of us together may appreciate and share the good news as we minister in Christ's name. Amen.

Would all of you who are able please stand with me and join in singing our opening hymn, “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”, number 376 (sung to the more familiar tune, Beecher #343) in our Hymnal.

The liturgist should step back from the microphone for the hymn.

***HYMN OF PRAISE** “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” *The Hymnal #376*

After the hymn, the preacher will step into the lectern and say...

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

God is aware of our obedience to the way of love and our rebellion against it. God does not delight in wickedness, yet He invites us to come, to confess our sins, and to seek the forgiveness he offers to all. Let us pray together the prayer of confession as it is printed in our bulletins, pausing at its end for a moment of silent prayer or meditation. Let us pray...

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

(In Unison)

Gracious God, you have chosen us in spite of our many failings, while we in turn have rejected you and your way more times that we can count. We have ignored the Good News by turning inward. We have remained blind to the needs of others and deaf to the pleas of those who cry out for aid. We have failed to take up our cross and have sought comfort and security rather than loving faithfulness. Forgive our failure to remember that you have ever been a very present help in times of trouble. Strengthen our trust and faith in you, that we may go forth in your name certain that our defeat in your service is impossible & that no evil may endure in your presence. Draw us back to the way of Christ, so that we might love others as he loved us. Restore to us the joy of our salvation & uphold us with your gracious Spirit. Amen.

***SILENT CONFESSION**

Pause for about 30 seconds of silence.

***THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

All we who "have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God... are now justified by his grace as a

gift, through the redemption that is ours in Christ Jesus ... ". Jesus has paved our way home, proving the reality and generosity of God's grace-filled, forgiving love. ...Friends believe the Good News!

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

*GLORIA PATRI

The Hymnal #579

Glory be to the Father, & to the Son, & to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, World without end. Amen, Amen.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

In Christ, God reconciled the world to himself, not counting our trespasses against us. Having been reconciled to God, let us be reconcile to one another in Christ's name and share the peace of Christ. The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Share the peace of Christ with others as you will.

After a few moments, the liturgist will step into pulpit and say...

"At this time I want to invite all of our younger friends to come forward for a Word from the Lord brought to them by Pastor Mike."

The liturgist will take a seat.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

(All Singing)

***Jesus friend so kind and gentle, little ones we bring to thee;
Grant to them thy dearest blessing. Let thine arms around them be;
Now enfold them in thy goodness, from all danger keep them free.***

Ask the children if they have ever kissed anyone's feet. Would they be willing to do so? Why would anyone kiss another's feet? Would they kiss Jesus' feet? Retell the story of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet. It is not necessary to use it as foreshadowing for burial preparation as children will be fascinated by the very act of bathing someone's feet with tears. Bring the children into the story of Jesus' anointing by either spraying perfume on them or allowing them to rub scented lotion onto their hands or feet. Encourage the children to recall a time when they really felt forgiven.

Close with prayer....

A MINUTE FOR MISSION

The Souper Bowl of Caring

As the children leave, the Preacher will return to the pulpit and introduce the Minute for Mission...

Each year on Super Bowl Sunday, youth across the country work to fight hunger and poverty in their own communities through a variety of Projects, such as last Sunday's hunger lunch, and by receiving an offering as part of the Souper Bowl of Caring. Here to tell us about it this year is Olivia Smith.

After the Minute for Mission, the Liturgist will return to the lectern & say...

THE INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We have been forgiven much, therefore we love much. We give our offerings in response to God's unconditional and limitless love showered upon us. Let us demonstrate our love for God and for our less fortunate brothers and sisters as we continue our worship with the presentation of our tithes and offerings...

The liturgist will sit down until the Doxology begins to play.

THE OFFERTORY

"Let Us Break Bread Together" –Richard Blake

Dr. Elizabeth Davis

*DOXOLOGY (In Unison)

The Hymnal #592

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

After the Doxology, the liturgist will return to the lectern and say...

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray... Gracious God, we understand that we cannot truly love you without also showing love to our neighbor. In gratitude for your amazing grace extended toward us, we make this offering without expectation of reward or response. Follow it with your blessing and use it to enlarge the kingdom of Christ. Amen.

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

"The Apostle's Creed"

Let us remain standing and reaffirm our Christian faith using the traditional words of the Apostles' Creed printed in our bulletins. Let us say what we believe...

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick & the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Invite the congregation to... "Be seated," and take a seat.

THE ANTHEM

"Jesu, Son of God Most Holy" –Mark Wilson

The Choir

After the choir finishes, the Liturgist will return to the lectern & say...

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Our first lesson this morning is taken from the first chapter of Paul's Letter to the Church at Ephesus, beginning at the third verse. You are encouraged to follow along and you can find the passage on page #1017 in your pew bibles.

Listen once more for the word of God...

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love[a] to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us. For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

The liturgist will return to his seat with family or friends in the congregation.

When the liturgist finishes, the preacher will step into the pulpit & say...

Our sermon text today is taken from the Gospel of Luke, the seventh chapter, beginning at the thirty-sixth verse. If you would like to read along, you can find it on page 897 of your pew bibles. Listen once more for the Word of God:

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house, and took his place at table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

And he answered, "What is it, Teacher?"

"A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he forgave them both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, to whom he forgave more."

And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house, you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE SERMON “Pride, Promiscuity, and Pardon” Rev. Mike Morgan

In the late 50's in a suburb of Philadelphia, the children celebrated the night before Halloween as “Mischief Night”-- a night for practical jokes and pranks. On one such night, two thirteen year old boys broke into a dime store not far from their homes. They didn't steal anything-- instead they did something far worse. They went around and changed the price tags on just about everything in the store. The next morning, when the store opened, people found that radios were selling for ten cents, while bobby pins were priced at ten dollars!” What was valuable had been made cheap, and what was cheap had been made valuable!

This story makes the point, that in our culture's broken value system, it's as if someone has broken in and changed the price tags. The result is that we invest little time in what is important - and we spend more and more time on what is worthless! Our values - our priorities - get all messed up!

Two thousand years ago, things weren't so much different. Power existed only to be perpetuated and kept in the same hands that had always had it, regardless of how it affected the people for who that power was supposed to have been used, to ease suffering, to clothe, to house, to feed, to care for those who were unable to care for themselves.

In our story from Luke's Gospel, we have just such a case. A nameless woman who had most likely been forced into an unspeakable existence by the greed and pride of wealthy and powerful men like Simon. She is nameless but known, forgiven, and loved by Christ. We know Simon's name but obviously he really doesn't know or understand the man he has invited to be his guest. He presumes to judge the judge, to doubt the only REAL person in he world.

Someone once said, “Pride is the only disease that makes everyone sick but the one who has it.” When you think about it, it's not so hard to understand.

In “Mere Christianity,” CS Lewis writes, “A proud person is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.” Simon the Pharisee had God in his dining room, and he didn't know it! As a result, he left unchanged. The Savior only saved one person that night, and it wasn't him.

Why? Think about it. What discovery has she made that Simon hasn't? What one treasure does she cherish that Simon doesn't? Simple. God's love. When she came to Jesus, SHE came thirsty-- Thirsty from guilt. Thirsty from regret. Thirsty from countless nights of making love and finding none. She came thirsty.

When Jesus hands her the goblet of grace, she drinks. She doesn't just taste or sip. She doesn't dip her finger and lick it. She lifts the vessel to her lips and drinks, gulping and swallowing like the parched pilgrim she is. She drinks until the mercy flows down her chin and onto her neck and chest. She drinks until every inch of her soul is moist and soft. She comes thirsty and she drinks. She drinks deeply.

Simon, on the other hand, doesn't even know he is thirsty. People like Simon don't need grace; they analyze it. They don't request mercy; they debate and prorate it. It wasn't that Simon couldn't be forgiven; he just never asks to be.

So while she drinks up, he puffs up. While she has ample love to give, he has no love to offer.

Why does she seem to be valued more than Simon?

A young minister who had recently attended a national preaching conference once told of a comment made by one of the famous preachers on the stage who commented how comfortable Jesus was with all kinds of sinners-- tax collectors, thieves, murderers, and EVEN PROSTITUTES! A former Jewish Rabbi who had received Christ and become the pastor of a Messianic Jewish congregation in Queens, New York took exception with his statement, rose to his feet and said, “Sir, Jesus never met a prostitute.”

The lecturer jumped at the opening. “Here's my chance,” he thought. “I can teach this guy *and the audience* a thing or two about Jesus and about the New Testament.” “Yes, He did,” the speaker responded. “I'll show you in my Bible where-”

The young man interrupted. “You didn't hear me, Dr. I said Jesus never met a prostitute.”

Once again the scholar protested and once again reached for his Bible.”

The homiletician recited a litany of incidents involving Jesus and fallen angels, soiled doves, or

whatever else you want to call these ladies of the evening... the woman at the well... Mary Magdalene... the woman caught in adultery... and this unnamed woman at Simon's house.

Once again, the young Jewish Christian pastor spoke out, this time with a touch of anger in his raised voice. "You're not listening to me, Doctor. You aren't listening to what I am saying. I am saying that Jesus never met a prostitute. Do you think that when he looked at Mary Magdalene he saw a prostitute? Do you think he saw whores when he looked at women like her? Doctor, listen to me! Jesus never met a prostitute!"

When Jesus looked on such women He didn't see them as they were.

He saw them as they could be.

I know some of you look good on the outside to others, but when you look in the mirror, you see every fault, every mistake, every act of cruelty or indifference. You see a sinner.

But when you come to Christ, he doesn't see a sinner. He sees a saint in the making, an obedient, faithful, forgiven child of God-- someone he loves enough to give his life for.

So many of us are so thirsty for this type of love. Those who should have loved us didn't. Those who could have loved us didn't. Maybe you were left at the hospital. Left at the altar. Left with an empty bed. Left with a broken heart. Left asking ourselves, "Does anybody love me?"

Please listen to heaven's answer. God loves you. Personally. Powerfully. Passionately.

Others have promised and failed. But God has promised and succeeded. He loves you with an un-failing love. And his love-- if you will let it-- can fill you and leave you with a love worth giving.

So come. Come thirsty and drink deeply.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Let us pray:

Forgive our warped thinking that leads us to the false pride that thinks we are better than we are, or to the false humility that leads us to believe that our sins are too great to be forgiven. Help us to look at ourselves honestly. Foster an awareness within us that we really do need a Savior, someone who will accept us as we are, love us as we are, and then help us to become better disciples, better servants, better people than we ever dared imagine we could be. Grant us, not just an awareness of your will for us, but the resolute determination to do your will. Grant us strength to persevere in your way until the end of our days on earth.

Pour out your Spirit upon this bread and cup that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ. Feed us now upon your body and blood so that even in the presence of sin and death we may know he is present here and everywhere. affirm and celebrate the mystery of your love. We ask this in the name of the Christ whose words still challenge and surprise us and who taught us to pray, saying...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on 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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Invitation

God knows that we are sinners. Nonetheless, he gave his body and his blood that we might be fed upon the bread of life and drink from the cup of salvation. Allow him to wrap you in his righteousness, to hide your sins beneath his own perfection, and then come. Come to eat your fill of his mercy and drink deeply of his pardon, for this is his feast and you are invited, not because you are worthy, but because he loves you. He has set a place at His table for you.

The Words of Institution

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord took the bread, and blessed it. After giving thanks, he broke it & gave it to his disciples saying: "Take, eat. This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In like fashion after they had eaten, he took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my

blood. Drink ye all of it.” As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again in final victory.

As the elements are distributed today, the servers will hand each tray to the first person in the pew & say with the bread, “The body of Christ, broken for you,” and with the fruit of the vine, “The blood of Christ shed for you.” You are invited to repeat those words when you pass the plates to the person next to you.

The Distribution of the Elements

The Prayer After Receiving

Thank you, Father, for sending your light to shine in our darkness and to lead us through the days still left to us on earth. We pray that we may go forth prepared to follow where you lead as you give us the light to do. Remind us always that to turn away from you is to fall, to turn toward you is to rise, and to stand before you is to abide forever. Grant us, dear God, in all our duties your help; in all our uncertainties your guidance; in all our dangers your protection; and in all our sorrows your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let all of us who are able stand & join in one voice to sing our hymn of dedication, “Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore”, hymn #377 in our Hymnals.

*HYMN OF DEDICATION “Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore”

The Hymnal #377

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

“Go, My Children, Fed and Nourished”

Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me;

Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.

Here my Spirit’s power filled you,

Here His tender comfort stilled you;

Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.

*POSTLUDE

Dr. Elizabeth Davis