

FPCM Worship Service- May 1st, 2016

The liturgist and pastor will meet in the hall outside the choir room a couple of minutes prior to the start of the service at 10:45am.

After a short prayer with the choir, the liturgist, choir, and organist will enter behind the Pastor and take their seats. The pastor will step into the pulpit, welcome everyone, and make these announcements....

The preacher will then ask...

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

The preacher will take a seat.

PRELUDE "Prelude on 'Promised Land'" - Anthony Giamanco Dr. Elizabeth Davis

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Rejoice in the Day!" - Dan Dykema The Choir

After the Choir sits down, the liturgist will step to the pulpit & say...

“Would you join me in reading responsively our call to worship, adapted from Psalm 84 and printed in our bulletins.”

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from Psalm 84)

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord;

My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home at your altars, O Lord of hosts.

Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.

They go from strength to strength; the God of gods is our shield.

A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness.

No good thing does God withhold from those who walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Let us worship God beginning with prayer...

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let us pray... Loving God, you have promised to meet those who seek Your face, so as we worship you with prayer and song. read from the pages of your Sacred Word, and proclaim your Good News, we ask that as you opened the tomb and raised Jesus to new life, you would also open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit. May this encounter with your transforming Word move us closer to the day when we will be new creatures reflecting more clearly the likeness of Christ to the world. Bless us to be a blessing unto the family and the world you have given, both now, and forevermore. Amen

“Would all of you who are able, please stand and join in singing “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”, #446 in *The Hymnal*.

*HYMN OF PRAISE “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” *The Hymnal* #446

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

*CALL TO CONFESSION

If we say we have no sin, we call God a liar and reveal that the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive our transgressions and make us to live as children of the light. Let us pray together the prayer of confession printed in our bulletins, pausing at its end for a moment of silent prayer. Let us pray.....

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(In Unison)

Holy and gracious God, we confess that, while your love and grace free us to live as new creations, we too often cling to and are weighed down by the old. We hold on to grudges and hurts rather than forgive; we justify our envy and greed rather than embrace our call to share our many blessings with others; we turn a deaf ear to pleas for mercy and demand instead that justice be done. For those times when we have been angry instead of kind, self-absorbed instead of thoughtful, fearful instead of bold, we ask your forgiveness. Remake us and equip us to trust in your goodness, to rest in your grace, and to live fully in the joy of your salvation. Amen.

*SILENT CONFESSION

(pause for about 30 seconds of silence)

*THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Know that whoever is in Christ is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.... 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

God, through Christ, has reconciled us to himself and entrusted us with the ministry of reconciliation. Let us answer his call to become ambassadors for Christ, as we share the peace of Christ with one another. 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 return to the lectern and say...

“At this time I want to invite all of our younger friends to come forward to the front pew for a message from the Lord prepared just for them by Ms. Karen.”

The liturgist will take a seat until after the handbells.

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.***

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Crown Him with Many Crowns”

The Handbell Choir

As the handbell choir leaves, the Liturgist will step to the pulpit and say,

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We have been given many blessings, not just to enrich our own lives, but so that we might be a blessing to others in Christ’s name. Let us share that bounty to be used in the service of the Gospel as we continue our worship with the presentation of our tithes and offerings...

Take your seat for the offertory.

THE OFFERTORY

"The Lord's My Shepherd" - Mark Sedio

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 pulpit and say...

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.... Generous God, for too long we have misdirected your resources entrusted to us for the service of your kingdom. As we begin to return your bounty, we thank you for the privilege of learning to value and share your gifts. Help us to become your true ambassadors, living to share your

goodness and grace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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...

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

“The Apostles' Creed”

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.

The liturgist will invite the congregation to... “Be seated,” and then take his seat.

ANTHEM "Ascribe to the Lord" - Dan R. Edwards The Choir

As the choir sits down, the liturgist will step to the lectern & say...

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Our first lesson this morning is taken from the fifth chapter of Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, beginning with the fourteenth verse. You are encouraged to follow along and you can find the passage on page #1006 in your pew bibles. Listen now for the Word of God. . . .

“For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”

The liturgist will return to his seat either on the chancel or with his family or friends in the congregation. Thanks so much for your help!

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

Our Sermon text for this morning is drawn from the Twenty-first Chapter of the Revelation of John, beginning at the first verse. You can find the passage on page 1085 in your pew bibles. Listen once more for the Word of God. . . .

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life without payment.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Our thanks be to God!

THE SERMON

“Fixer Upper”

One of the big hits on television today isn't a mystery, or a drama, or a comedy, but a one of that new genre of entertainment of reality TV. It is video chronicle that features none of the Kardashians, nor surviving naked in the wilderness, but instead stars an unabashedly Christian young couple from Jerusalem on the Brazos-- Waco, TX.

Each week Chip and Joanna Gaines take empty, rundown, often derelict houses and with seat and craft and vision, convert these wrecks into dream homes for new families.

Only rarely is there a project that goes entirely as expected. After selecting their client families select the houses they want, Chip begins demolition, tearing out old walls, floors, and even roofs. walls are bumped out, ceilings bumped up, no part of the house is left untouched by the renovation process. And in the process, something old, fit only for complete demolition, or burning is given new life-- it's not just a new house, but a completely different kind of house, custom crafted to fit the precise needs of the new owners for generations to come.

Consider this TV show a parable of what God intends for us. Many of us have seen better days, those closest to us have moved on and live somewhere else. Our foundations are a little shaking. Our walls are bowed with age, our floors creak. We leak. We feel abandoned, alone, fit only to be torn down to make room for something else that is newer, fancier.

C.S. Lewis invites us:

“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of - throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.” *Mere Christianity*, Book IV, ch. 9

Of course we never wanted, and never asked, to be made into the sort of creatures He is going to make us into. But the question is not what we intended ourselves to be, but what He intended us to be when He made us. He is the master builder, we are only the fixer upper.

And lest we doubt His ability to work such change in us, we must remember that He has already made us something very different from what we were. Long ago, before we were born, when we were inside our mothers' bodies, we passed through various stages. We were once rather like vegetables, and once rather like fish; it was only at a later stage that we became like human babies. And if we had been conscious at those earlier stages, I daresay we should have been quite contented to stay as vegetables or fish-- should not have wanted to be made into babies. But all the time He knew His plan for us and was determined to carry it out.

Something the same is now happening at a higher level. We may be content to remain what we call "ordinary people": but He is determined to carry out a quite different plan. To shrink back from that plan is not humility; it is laziness and cowardice. To submit to it is not conceit; it is obedience.

And that is precisely what Christianity is about. God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man. It is not like teaching a horse to jump better and better but like turning a horse into a winged creature.

Now , many of us are worried that we will be turned into mindless “Stepford” Christians. Each one of us resembling closely every other one of us. Sort of like a house in a new subdivision where the houses all look alike-- same floor plan, same color roof, same brick. No uniqueness. No individuality.

But we must not imagine that the new Christians made from these fixer uppers are, in the ordinary sense, all alike. To become new means that His will is to become ours and we are to think

His thoughts, to "have the mind of Christ" as the Bible says. And if Christ is one, and if He is thus to be "in" us all, shall we not be exactly the same? It certainly sounds like it; but in fact it is not so.

It is a difficult concept to grasp; but let me use a pair of slightly imperfect illustrations to help us grasp it.

Imagine a lot of people who have always lived in the dark. You come and try to describe to them what light is like. You might tell them that if they come into the light that same light would fall on them all and they would all reflect it and thus become what we call visible. It is possible that they would imagine that, since they were all receiving the same light, and all reflecting it in the same way, that they would all look alike? Whereas you and I know that the light will in fact bring out, or show up, how different they are.

Or suppose a person who knew nothing about salt was given a pinch to taste. He would experience salt's own characteristic sharp taste. You then tell him that in your country people use salt in all their cookery. Might he not reply "In that case I suppose all your dishes taste exactly the same: because the taste of that stuff you have just given me is so strong that it will kill the taste of everything else." But you and I know that the real effect of salt is exactly the opposite. Far from killing the taste of the meat, or potatoes, or beans, or peach pie, it actually intensifies and brings out their own characteristic flavors. out. They do not show their real taste till you have added the salt.

It is something like that with Christ and us. The more we let Him take us over, the more we truly become ourselves. We may be made new, but it does not mean the same as all other new things.

What the Gaineses do with old houses, Jesus does with old souls. From the beginning, this is what God has always done. In the very first verses from Genesis, God takes that which is "formless and void and filled with darkness" and created a wondrous and amazing new universe that is filled with wondrous light. In the Exodus story, he took a people that were battered, enslaved, and without identity and forms them into a nation that is free, numerous, and makes them his own.

This is the story of the Gospel. God, in Jesus, makes all things new.

Again, borrowing from C.S. Lewis, "This world is a great sculptor's shop. God is the sculptor and we are the statues; and there is a rumor going round the shop that some of us are some day going to come to life." (*Mere Christianity*, Book IV, ch. 1)

THE PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

O God of promise, you are always at work making all things new. New every morning are your mercies. Fresh as breeze after a spring shower is your grace which comes to us when we are in need. From the beginning you have taken ordinary flawed creatures no better than ourselves, fit them for your purpose, and made them each into a shining example of your creative skill. You have taken that which is corrupt and purified it, that which is dying and gave it new life, that which is old and ugly and bestowed it with new beauty and grace.

As in Jesus you are preparing a new place for us in your kingdom, we pray that you would no less enter our lives, and render them into fit places for your holy dwelling among us. Break down our old habits and ways of doing things; wash our windows and throw open our doors so that you may enter and shine your light into every darkened place in our lives; strengthen our foundations that we may weather any storm, survive any assault, and offer ourselves to all in need of your divine protection.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, we pray, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be to us the communion of the body and blood of Christ. Grant that, being joined together in him, we may attain to the unity of the faith and grow up in all things into Christ, our Lord.

And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf, and these grapes from many hills into one cup, grant that your church may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth and made one in the kingdom of Him 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. Do not be concerned if you feel unworthy to receive His gift. He has come to make you a new person-- a holy temple. That work of transformation begins here and now. It is for you that 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 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.

The Words of Institution

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord took bread, and after he had give 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. After he had given thanks he gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, drink ye all of it."

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again in final victory.

The Distribution of the Elements

The Prayer After Receiving

Let us pray... Lord Jesus, thank you for uniting us by baptism into your body, the Church. Thank you for filling us with joy and strengthening us for the tasks ahead through the meal we have shared at your table. Having received a foretaste of the banquet we will share in your kingdom, lead us to acknowledge the awesome debt of love we owe by speaking truth in love, by joyfully serving others in your name, and by building bridges to restore the unity of your body on earth, the church. Amen.

Let all of us who are able stand and join in one voice to sing our closing hymn, "Have Thine Own Way, Lord", which is printed in our bulletins.

***HYMN OF DEDICATION**

"Have Thine Own Way, Lord"

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after Thy will, While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Search me and try me, Master, today!
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now, As in Thy presence humbly I bow.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!
Power, all power, surely is Thine! Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Hold o'er my being absolute sway!
Fill with Thy Spirit 'till all shall see Christ only, always, living in me.

***THE BLESSING**

***THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

"Spirit of the Living God"

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

***POSTLUDE**

Dr. Elizabeth Davis