

BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140
January 16, 2022 10:30 a.m.
Celebrating 207 years of Faithful Service to Our God
The Second Sunday after Epiphany

We Enter Into God's Presence

WELCOME

L: This is the day that the Lord has made.

P: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

THE PEACE

L: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

P: And also with you.

“SURELY THE PRESENCE”

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

I can feel His mighty power and His grace.

I can hear the brush of angel's wings, I see glory on each face.

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

P: and we have seen his glory.

L: To all who received him,

P: he gave power to become children of God.

OPENING PRAYER

Great God, your mercy is an unexpected miracle. Help us to believe and obey, that we may be filled with the wine of new life, promised in the power of Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN: B- 460 “Holy God, We Praise Your Name”

1 Holy God, we praise Your name; Lord of all, we
bow before You; All on earth Your scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore You. Infinite Your
vast domain, Everlasting is Your reign.

2 Hark, the glad celestial hymn Angel choirs
above are raising; Cherubim and seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising, Fill the heavens with
sweet accord: Holy, holy, holy Lord.

3 All apostles join the strain As Your sacred
name they hallow; Prophets swell the glad refrain,
And the blessed martyrs follow, And, from morn to
set of sun, Through the church the song goes on.

4 Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit.
Three we name You; While in essence only One;
Undivided God, we claim You, And adoring
bend the knee, While we own the mystery.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor as we pray together saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our sinfulness, our shortcomings, and our offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in your light, and walk in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun.

P: We know that we are forgiven and we can be at peace. Thanks be to God! Amen.

***RESPONSE:**

“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.

We Hear God's Word

SPECIAL MUSIC: W&R-438 "On Eagle's Wings"

1 You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life, say to the Lord, "My refuge My Rock, in whom I trust!"

Refrain

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun and hold you in the palm of his hand

2 The snare of the fowler will never capture you and famine will bring you no fear, under his wings, your refuge, his faithfulness, your shield. *Refrain*

3 You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day; though thousands fall about you near you it shall not come *Refrain*

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. ³Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to

another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

PSALM: Psalm 36:5-10

- ⁵ Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.
- ⁶ Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.
You, LORD, preserve both people and animals.
- ⁷ How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- ⁸ They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.
- ⁹ For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.
- ¹⁰ Continue your love to those who know you,
your righteousness to the upright in heart.

GOSPEL LESSON: John 2:1-11

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ² and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

⁴ "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶ Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

⁷ Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

⁸ Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.”

They did so, ⁹ and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside ¹⁰ and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.”

¹¹ What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

MESSAGE: ***The Time is Right*** **Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman**

When you think about certain events in our lives, you realize that timing is everything. There is a clear timing to a joke – if your timing is right, you will have folks laughing with delight. If your timing is off – folks will just look at you and all you will hear is the sound of a cricket chirping. There is timing to a meal preparation – if your timing is good, you will have a wonderful meal in which to indulge. If your timing is off – you will be placing burnt offerings upon your table.

Timing is a central component to today’s scripture. A wedding feast in Jesus time would last for about a week. So for the wine to run out on the third day is an unmitigated disaster. Since the flowing wine was considered to be a blessing upon the couple and their lives together, the lack of wine would be understood as a scarcity of blessing upon the couple. Talk about a dreadful moment for the host of the wedding! Grace and blessing are experienced as being scarce instead of being in abundance. What a terrible situation!

Perhaps out of compassion toward the wedding host or maybe for some deeper meaning, Mary seeks out Jesus and informs him of the situation. Jesus makes it crystal clear that he thinks his mother’s timing is completely off. With the very formal statement of: “Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come,” it seems that Jesus does not believe that the timing is right. When Jesus speaks of his “hour,” he isn’t speaking of a time and date on his calendar, he’s talking about the time

when God will reveal God's glory as the Son of God through the cross, resurrection, and ascension; the time when God will be accessible to all, once and for all. That time, that hour, Jesus says, has not yet come.

Or has it? Have you ever noticed that sometimes mothers understand timing better than other people? It seems to be the case that Mary has an insight into the goings on of the moment. Perhaps Mary senses that now is the time for Jesus to reveal himself as the Son of God. Perhaps it is important for the people to understand the abundance of God's grace and blessings upon them. Perhaps the timing is right for Jesus to show that he can, indeed, make a difference to all humanity in this simple act of turning water to wine. So with certainty, Mary tells the servants to do whatever it is that Jesus tells them to do.

I think it is easy for us to gloss over the amount of water that Jesus ultimately turns into wine. I think many of us hear six stone jars, but miss that each stone jar holds about thirty gallons of water. We are not talking about six small bottles of wine; we are talking about 180 gallons of wine. That much wine at a wedding feast would be viewed as boundless abundance meaning boundless blessing for the people.

The quality of the wine is just as surprising as its quantity. Saving the best for last is unheard of with a wedding feast that lasts for a week. Most people serve the good stuff to their honored guests and those arriving later get the bottom of the barrel. Not so when Jesus turns the water into the finest wine! All people, no matter when they have arrived, get the best lavishly poured out for each and every person and there is no holding back.

I wonder if you noticed anything else in this reading. Did you notice that John reports that it is the third day of the wedding. And in response, careful readers throughout history have asked, "Wait a minute? Did you just say it was the *third* day; as in "after the third day he was raised from the dead?" That's right. Because whenever there is need and Jesus is close by, resurrection and abundance are right around the corner.

And knowing this makes all the difference. For every moment that we live in Jesus has the capacity to mediate the divine. Bread and wine can bear Christ's body and blood. An ordinary hug can convey unbounded love and blessing. The smallest donation of food or money can tip the balance between scarcity and abundance. A simple act of kindness can make all

the difference in the world. And a smile, shared at just the right time, can shed light into the darkest of places.

This oddly timed sign revealed something unique about Jesus, the Son of God and second person of the Trinity. When Jesus is on the scene, anything is possible. Because, as John testified in the first verses of this gospel, Jesus reveals in his own person God's grace upon grace. So when Jesus is with us, so is God as accessible to the whole of creation and available to all of humanity. Because of Jesus, whatever time we think it may be we also know it is God's time. God's timing of sending Jesus for our redemption is perfect, therefore we know without the shadow of a doubt that with God *all* things are possible.

We Respond with Thanksgiving

HYMN: B- 326 "Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart"

1 Spirit of God, who dwells within my heart;
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move.
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

2 Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King,
All, all Thine own; soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
I see Thy cross, there teach my heart to cling.
O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!

3 Teach me to feel that Thou are always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unceasing prayer.

4 Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame:
The baptism of the heaven-descended Dove;
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,

died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen. (*The Apostles' Creed-Ecumenical*)

OFFERING (Please remember to mail your offering to Bethel Murdoch Presbyterian Church, 9602 Murdoch Goshen Road, Loveland, Ohio 45140)

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.

JOYS & CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION – (Please send your joys and concerns to the church email and we will publish them in the weekly ENews)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ, you taught us to pray. Guide us by your Holy Spirit, that our prayers for others may serve your will and show your steadfast love.

God our creator, you made all things in your wisdom, and in your love you save us. We pray for the whole creation. Overthrow evil powers, right what is wrong, feed and satisfy those who thirst for justice, so that all your children may freely enjoy the earth you have made, and joyfully sing your praises.

Merciful God, you bear the pain of the world. Look with compassion on those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit. Cheer them by your word, and bring healing as a sign of your grace.

God of comfort, stand with those who sorrow that they may be sure that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall separate them from your love.

God of all generations, we praise you for all your servants who, having been faithful to you on earth, now live with you in heaven. Keep us in

fellowship with them, until we meet with all your children in the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Mighty God, whose Word we trust, whose Spirit enables us to pray: Accept our prayers and further those which will bring about your purpose for the earth; through Jesus Christ, the One who taught us to say as we pray,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

We are Sent Out to Love and Serve

HYMN: B-276 "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

1 Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy
hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. Refrain

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain

Charge and Benediction

Go out into the world in peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.

And as you go out, know that you take with you the love of God, the grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and the *awesome* power of the Holy Spirit.

Choral Amen

Postlude