

BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140
January 30, 2022 10:30 a.m.
Celebrating 207 years of Faithful Service to Our God
The Fourth 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: I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,

P: by the mercies of God,

L: to present your bodies as a living sacrifice,

P: holy and acceptable to God.

OPENING PRAYER

God of compassion, you have shown us in Christ that your love is never-ending. Enable us to love you with all our hearts and to love one another as Christ loved us. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN: B-455 “All Creatures of Our God and King”

1 All creatures of our God and King, Lift up your voice
and with us sing, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam, Thou silver moon with
softer gleam! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

2 Thou rushing wind that art so strong, Ye clouds that sail
in heaven along, O sing ye! Alleluia!
Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice, Ye lights of evening,
find a voice! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

3 Thou flowing water, pure and clear, Make music for
thy Lord to hear, Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright, That givest us both
warmth and light. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

4 Thou fertile earth, that day by day Unfoldest bless
ings on your way, O sing ye! Alleluia!
The flowers and fruits in thee grow, Let them God's glory
also show! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

CALL TO CONFESSION:

The proof of God's amazing love is this: While we were sinners Christ died for us. Because we have faith in him, we dare to approach God with confidence. In faith and penitence, let us confess our sin before God and one another 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! The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin, and alive to all that is good. I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

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-399 "Ubi Caritas et Amor"

Ubi caritas et amor, ubi caritas Deus ibi est.
Where true charity and love abide, God is dwelling there; God is dwelling there.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

PSALM: Psalm 71:1-6

- ¹ In you, LORD, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
- ² In your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me;
turn your ear to me and save me.
- ³ Be my rock of refuge,
to which I can always go;
give the command to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.
- ⁴ Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of those who are evil and cruel.
- ⁵ For you have been my hope, Sovereign LORD,
my confidence since my youth.
- ⁶ From birth I have relied on you;
you brought me forth from my mother's womb.
I will ever praise you.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 4:21-30

²¹ He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

²³ Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

²⁴ "Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵ I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. ²⁷ And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

MESSAGE: *Being a Prophet is Hard Work!*

Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman

What do you think of when I say the word prophet? Do you think of fortune tellers or gypsies reading tarot cards? Do you think of people who predict the future, like Jeanne Dixon or Nostradamus? Do you think of occults and voodoo? For many of us, the word prophet brings about different definitions and ideas.

In our scripture today we hear about biblical prophets and so I want to set the record straight about what a prophet is so that we are all on the same page. A prophet in the biblical context is someone who has been chosen by God to share God's truth with a particular people in a particular place and sometimes that message while being particular can also transcend time and remain relevant to us today because it is God's truth.

Can you imagine God calling you to become a prophet, someone who even in the face of adversity and danger proclaims God's truth whether people want to hear it or not? In our world, we often see people who choose to let public opinion carry them away even though they may not agree with it. They would rather go with the flow than to take a stand and say what they believe to be their own experience of God's truth. But that is not what a prophet is called to do.

A prophet is called to stand up in the face of people who have turned away from God and challenge their leaving God while calling them back into the fold. Sometimes a prophet must go toe to toe with the authorities or people in power and tell them that they are wrong and that their actions are against what God would have them do. Sometimes that might even mean a prophet will ignore a powerful person's demands because their demands do not fit into God's timing or the powerful person's heart is not right with God.

People usually do not like to hear that they are wrong or have erred in any way. As a result prophets were often criticized, called crazy, tortured or in extreme cases prophets were put to death. As you can see it is not easy being a prophet, it requires hard work and determination while trusting completely in God. Often times ridicule and abuse are the possible payment options. What's not to love about this job? Your life is completely

out of your control, you must rely totally on God and you might just die to get God's truth out into the world starting where you live.

We hear that Jesus had a terrible time in his own home town. When he went to the temple, Jesus proclaimed that he was no mere prophet who was well learned and spoke graciously. Jesus proclaimed that because of Israel's continued sins against God, God often sent prophets to people who were not of the Israelite nation. Jesus inferred that God could not get through to the chosen people so God had to have his own prophets go to those outside of God's law. The Israelites had turned so far away from God that only foreigners were able to hear God's message.

The response from the people in the temple was swift and strong – the people of the temple became enraged and attacked Jesus dragging him from the temple with the intent of throwing him off a nearby cliff. But because Jesus is the embodiment of God's truth, Jesus simply passed through the middle of the crowd and went on his way. It was Jesus' turn to do what he would later instruct his disciples to do with any people or town who would not listen to God's truth. Jesus left the town, shaking the dust of the town off of his sandals to show that they did not believe in God nor were they willing to hear God's truth.

Let me ask you this, what if a prophet came into your midst today and proclaimed the Good News of God's truth for you and all of creation, do you think you would be able to hear that you have turned away from God by what you say and think and do? Would you immediately complain and poke back at the prophet telling them they do not understand and saying that they should just leave things be so that your life can return to its acceptable chaotic state? Or do you think that you would be able to accept the challenge of God's truth from the prophet and change what needs to be changed encouraging others to also hear God's truth? The bigger question is would you take on the hard job of prophet if God called you to proclaim God's truth? My friends, that is exactly the case. You and I have been called to share the Good News of God's truth in the person of Jesus with everyone that we meet.

May God give each one of us the strength and guidance that we will need to be faithful and obedient servants of Jesus Christ and to become prophets who share God's truth in this world.

We Respond with Thanksgiving

HYMN: B- 302

“I Danced in the Morning”

1 I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth;
At Bethlehem I had My birth.

Refrain

Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He.
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said He.

2 I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they would not follow Me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
They came with Me and the dance went on. *Refrain*

3 I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
The holy people said it was a shame;
They whipped and they stripped and they hung Me high,
And left Me there on a cross to die. *Refrain*

4 I danced on a Friday and when the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back;
They buried My body and they thought I'd gone:
But I am the dance and I still go on. *Refrain*

5 They cut Me down and I leap up high;
I am the life that will never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in Me:
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He. *Refrain*

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, who taught us to pray not only for ourselves but for people everywhere, hear us as we pray for others, in the name of Jesus Christ. Inspire the whole church with your power, unity, and peace. Grant that all who trust you may obey your Word, and live together in love.

Lead all nations in the way of justice and goodwill. Direct those who govern, that they may rule fairly, maintain order, uphold those in need, and defend oppressed people; that this world may claim your rule and know true peace.

Awaken all people to the danger we have inflicted upon the earth. Implant in each a reverence for all you have made that we may preserve the delicate balance of creation for all coming generations.

Give grace to all who proclaim the gospel through Word and Sacrament and deeds of mercy, that by their teaching and example they may reveal your love for all people.

Comfort and relieve, O Lord, all who are in trouble ... sorrow ... poverty ... sickness ... grief ... especially those known to us, whom we name before you in silence ... Heal them in body, mind, or circumstance, working in them, by your grace, wonders beyond all they may dream or hope.

Bring to our remembrance all those who, having served you on earth, now sing your praises eternally. May their endurance give us courage and their faithfulness give us hope; through Jesus Christ our Savior, 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-210 "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

1 O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home:

2 Before the hills in order stood, Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

3 A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

4 Time, like an ever rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten, as a dream Dies at the opening day.

5 Our God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last, And our eternal home.

Charge and Benediction

Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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