

BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140
June 26, 2022 10:30 a.m.
Celebrating 207 years of Faithful Service to Our God
The Third Sunday after Pentecost

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: You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,

P: a holy nation, God's own people,

L: in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of the One who called you

P: out of darkness into God's marvelous light.

OPENING PRAYER

Sovereign God, ruler of all hearts, you call us to obey you and favor us with true freedom. Keep us faithful to the ways of your Son, that, leaving behind all that hinders us, we may fix our eyes on him and steadfastly follow in the paths of your kingdom. Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN: B-477 “Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim”

1 Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad His wonderful name;

The name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
His kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

2 God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
And still He is nigh – His presence we have;
The great congregation His triumph shall sing,
Ascribing salvation to Jesus our King.

3 "Salvation to God, who sits on the throne,"
Let all cry aloud, and honor the Son;
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.

4 Then let us adore, and give Him his right,
All glory and power, all wisdom and might,
All honor and blessing, with angels above,
And thanks never ceasing, and infinite love.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God as we pray together saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Merciful God, you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you. We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with you, our God. Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness. In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. May the God of mercy,

your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

PSALM: Psalm 16

¹ Keep me safe, my God,
for in you I take refuge.

² I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;
apart from you I have no good thing.”

³ I say of the holy people who are in the land,
“They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.”

⁴ Those who run after other gods will suffer more and more.
I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods
or take up their names on my lips.

⁵ LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup;
you make my lot secure.

⁶ The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely I have a delightful inheritance.

⁷ I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.

⁸ I keep my eyes always on the LORD.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
¹⁰ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.
¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 9:51-62

⁵¹ As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵² And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³ but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ Then he and his disciples went to another village.

⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

⁵⁹ He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

⁶¹ Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.”

⁶² Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

MESSAGE: *Will You Go Where the Spirit Leads?*

Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman

Have you ever noticed how Jesus always challenges the status quo? He always seems to direct people to do that which is contrary to what would normally happen in a given moment. As human beings, we like things to feel familiar and stable. We achieve that by doing the same thing over and over again whether after time doing that very thing makes sense or not. We hang our hat on the notion that it is only done well or right if it is done precisely as it has previously been done. There are seven words that describe this behavior perfectly. Perhaps you have heard them? It has always been done that way.

How many of us have bought into that ideal throughout our lives? In what ways do we limit what could happen in our lives by making those seven words our mantra? Tradition is one thing and if you are re-creating history in a historical setting that's fine— but having to do things exactly the same way at exactly the same moment as great-great-great-great grandmother did just because “it has always been done that way” is taking it to the extreme. The rigidity of not allowing new ideas to blossom leaves little room for folks to evolve a tradition and make it more meaningful for themselves and future generations.

Have you ever thought about the fact that throughout the Bible we hear of the Holy Spirit blowing through the wilds and wilderness and into the hearts of people so that they will come to know God? That Jesus left the Holy Spirit so that those who follow Jesus will be inspired and do great things in His name. As opposed to those seven words which will stop growth, they will stop life, they will stop love and they will stop inspiration because the words “it has always been done that way” puts a roadblock up that says travel no further, stop where you are, cease and desist.

We all do it. We all have something that is near and dear to our hearts and we think it should be re-enacted over and over in exactly the same way because we want to have the same feeling we had the first time we experienced it. But if we are so rigid that we insist that “it has always been done that way” meaning that it is the only way to do something, each re-enactment of an event becomes more and more lifeless. We are just going through the motions with no spontaneity and each re-enactment feels more and more like a museum piece instead of something relevant, living and vibrant.

Be honest with yourself. Do you really want to live your life stuck in a museum display missing out on the wonders of the world we can experience through the movement of the Holy Spirit? Do we have such an overwhelming desire and need to be in control, that we utter those seven words in an effort to make the world stop turning? Do we realize that we are allowing our lives to become dusty, irrelevant, and stagnant?

Or are we really willing to trust in God the Father who sent the Son? Are we willing to trust in God the Son who left us the Holy Spirit? Are we willing to trust in God the Holy Spirit who blows and moves in our hearts to do amazing things in this world in Jesus' Name?

So friends, it is time for you to make a conscious choice: "It has always been done that way" or following where the Holy Spirit leads you – which will you choose?

We Respond with Thanksgiving

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

1 Spirit of God, descend upon 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 art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered 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 hosts; 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

Let us pray,

Holy and merciful God, we ask that you empower the church throughout the world in its life and witness. Break down the barriers that divide that, united in your truth and love, the church may confess your name, share one baptism, sit together at one table, and serve you in one common ministry.

Guide the rulers of the nations. Move them to set aside their fear, greed, and vain ambition, and bow to your sovereign rule. Inspire them to strive for peace and justice, that all your children may dwell secure, free of war and injustice.

Look with compassion on all who suffer. Support with your love those with incurable and stigmatized diseases, those unjustly imprisoned, those denied dignity, those who live without hope, and those who are homeless or abandoned. As you have moved toward us in love, so lead us to be present with them in their suffering.

Sustain those among us who need your healing touch. Make the sick whole. Give hope to the dying. Comfort those who mourn. Uphold all who suffer in body or mind, not only those we know and love but also those known only to you, that they may know the peace and joy of your supporting care.

With thanksgiving we remember before you those saints who bore witness to the light. Grant that we may persevere in the faith to which we have been called and at the end behold your glory.

O God, in your loving purpose answer our prayers and fulfill our hopes. In all things for which we pray, give us the will to seek to bring them about, for the sake of 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-324 "Open My Eyes That I May See"

1 Open my eyes, that I may see Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee, Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

2 Open my ears, that I may hear Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, Everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee, Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

3 Open my mouth, and let me bear Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee, Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

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