

# The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling

World Communion Sunday  
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
Online and Indoor Worship Service  
October 4, 2020

## WELCOME

## PRELUDE

*Renew Me, O Eternal Light*

J. G. Walther

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Sing praises to God, who created the heavens and the earth!

***Sing praises to our Creator, who makes us brothers and sisters!***

Lift up your voices and hands to God, who is worthy of praise,

***Come join together in worshiping the God who makes us one.***

Center your hearts on Christ, who calls upon us to love one another.

***In prayer and praise and thanksgiving, we worship Jesus our Lord.***

## OPENING PRAYER

Lord, from the mountaintop in ancient Israel, you gave your people ways in which to live in harmony with all creation. As time has progressed, the power of those words seems to have faded in our lives and we often succumb to base temptations of power and greed. Bring us back to your words of compassion and hope, offered to all creation by your Son Jesus. Open our hearts to receive your love and your direction in our lives.

***Amen.***

## HYMN

*Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Things*

J.R. Renville

***Many and great, O God, are Thy things,***

***Maker of earth and sky.***

***Thy hands have set the heavens with stars;***

***Thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.***

***Lo, at Thy word the waters were formed;***

***Deep seas obey Thy voice.***

***Grant unto us communion with Thee,***

***Thou star-a-biding One;***

***Come unto us and dwell with us:***

***With Thee are found the gifts of life.***

***Bless us with life that has no end,***

***Eternal life with Thee.***

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***God of Wisdom, we have dwelled in foolish ways, turning away from You to follow the desires of the world. We have sought worldly gain over the needs of our brothers and sisters. We have given in to anger, hate, and fear rather than compassion and mercy. We have jumped to conclusions rather than waiting patiently to learn. Forgive us for tagging along to the ways of the world, and turn us back to follow You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.***

**(Silent Confession)**

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Where can we go from God's spirit? Where can we flee from God's presence? There is no place that is too far for God to find us, no place that is too dark for God's light not to shine. We are God's beloved.

***The Good News is that God will seek us all the days of our lives.  
We are forgiven, loved, and restored. Amen.***

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SCRIPTURE READING**      Matthew 21:33-46

**SERMON**                      *Who Are You Sitting Next To?*                      Rev. Dr. Thomas T. Peters

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

***We believe in God, maker of all things,  
provider of all things, who loves all people.  
We follow Jesus, in whom salvation has come to us:  
he sees us for who we are,  
heals the wounds of our hearts, and makes us new.***

***In His death and resurrection, we see the deepest truth  
of life. We live by the power of the Holy Spirit, which  
empowers us for self-giving love. We give thanks for  
the Church, the Body of Christ, and for the gift of  
forgiveness, the power of resurrection, and the mystery  
of eternal life. Amen.***

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

### **OFFERING**

Offertory:              *Piano Quartet (3<sup>rd</sup> Movement)*

R. Schumann

Prayer of Dedication

## **INVITATION**

## **GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

May the composer of heaven's music be with you!

***And also with you!***

Beloved, God has created you for faithful living.

***We lift our hearts to the One who calls us to be Christ's Body.***

People of God, sing to the One who cleanses us of our fears.

***We will dance with joy to the Table of peace and hope.***

Chaos trembled as you spoke, not wanting to hear your goodness breaking it apart, Rock and Redeemer of all. Creation sang oratorios for you, while earth drummed out the rhythm. Each day testified 'God is good;' each night whispered 'Glory!'

***All that was beautiful and true was created for us, but wanting to know sin and death, we exchanged the best you gave to us, for the garbage they offered.***

Using words and wonder, silence and speech, prophets came to call us back into your covenantal love, but we continued to yearn for what we could not have.

***Finally, you sent your Son, in love, in hope, in peace, that we would accept him and the gift of new life.***

So, with those who trembled at the foot of your holy mountain, and with those who press on to follow you, we join our voices in praise to you:

***Your Word opens our eyes to all creation;  
your Word is the sweet taste of joy for hungry hearts;  
your Word endures through every trial and triumph.  
Blessed is your Word which comes in your name!  
Hosanna in the highest!***

Holy are you, God of all creation, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Yearning for us to know you, he came to be your face of love and compassion for all. Hungering for reconciliation between you and your children, he became the broken Bread of Life. Aching for our release from the agony of sin and death, he suffered on the cross, so we might be made well.

As we remember his goodness and gentleness, As we celebrate his life in us, we would speak of that mystery we call faith:

***Setting aside all he valued,  
Christ became our treasure;  
setting aside his own life,  
Christ rescued us from sin;  
setting aside our doubts and fears,  
we yearn for Christ's return in glory.***

Here at your Table, Redeemer of all creation, pour out your Spirit on the gifts of the bread and the cup, and on our sisters and brothers in Christ.

***Your Spirit gives us life, so we may go and serve others. Your Spirit heals our brokenness, so we may bring healing to all. Your Spirit graces us with peace, so we may be peacemakers for our communities.***

And when we stand around your Table, all hurtful words silenced, all pain left behind, with hope and grace our closest friends, we will join our hearts and voices with our sisters and brothers who forever sing of your glory, God in community, Holy in One.

***Amen.***

### **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.***

### **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

### **COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

### **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER (Unison)**

***Help us rise in your resurrection power from this table where you, the Ruler of the Universe, have served us by your own hand, that we may extend your arms of peace to a world at war. This we ask through Christ, in Christ, with Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.***

### **HYMN**

*Let Us Break Bread Together*

African American Spiritual

***Let us break bread together on our knees, (on our knees)  
Let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees)  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)***

***Let us drink wine together on our knees, (on our knees)  
Let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees)***

***When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)***

***Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)  
Let us praise God together on our knees. (on our knees)  
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)***

## **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**      *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*      J. Pachelbel

Today's written prayers are by Nancy C. Townley for the *ministrymatters.com* website and Mindi Welton-Mitchell for her Rev-o-lution website. The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving is by Rev. Dr. Thom Shuman for his website, *lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com*. The Affirmation of Faith is by Steven Garnass-Holmes of the United Methodist church.

Tatiana Akhounzianova is the church organist and pianist for these services. Our Liturgists for today are Kai Ihringer and Katherine Ihringer.

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

Bill Richter, Nina (Tatiana's Mother,) Kristin & Karin & Steve (Joyce Koenig), George Armenti III, Ann Ventura (Toni Hopcraft), B.J. Cardinali, Robin Schmidt, Sheryl Greife (Tom Parziale), Art Fletcher, Jennifer Moore (Veronica Moore), Bill Hurlock (Joyce Koenig), Ken Crawford (Jan Somers), Phyllis Clemson, Justin Byrnes (Tom Parziale), Bryan Hague, Al Wemuth (Paul & Sue Wermuth), Maryann (Leslie Beechner), Howard Boice – needs a kidney transplant (friend of Bill Hopcraft's), Nancy Walsh (Dawn Mackay), Vicky Sama (Joanne Sama), Jean Marie Dowling (Lore & Rich Pateman), Marge McKeever (Brooke Parziale's grandmother), Veronica Moore.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Rich Pateman      Sunday, 10/4  
Kimberly Ridgway      Monday, 10/5

## **FLOWERS**

The flowers this morning are given by Elsie Turqman in honor of her loving family.