

Saint Andrews United Presbyterian Church

September 20, 2020 16th Sunday after Pentecost

10:30 AM

The Prayers of the People and 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.

A Minute for Stewardship

Kathy Eamigh

The Church Goes Forth to Serve

The Closing Hymn #692

"Spirit, Open My Heart"

(Glory to God)

Refrain:

Spirit, open my heart to the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love, in receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.

God, replace my stony heart with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear to your grace I now surrender.

Refrain

Write your love upon my heart as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed, may my living bring you glory.

Refrain

May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ, may we welcome one another.

Refrain

The Benediction

The Postlude

The Church in Preparation

The Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

The Introit and Time of Centering #2226 "Bind Us Together"

(Sing the Faith)

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together,
Lord, bind us together in love.

There is only one God, there is only one King;
There is only one body, that is why we sing.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together,
Lord, bind us together in love.

The Call to Worship

Kathy Eamigh

Leader: Come out of the darkness of despair
into the light of God's transforming love.

Though the waves of doubt and fear surge and churn,

People: God is ever with us, steadying us with God's strength and grace.

Leader: Though the storms of anger and division threaten to overwhelm us.

People: God guides our path, leading us in the way of mercy and peace.

Leader: Let us worship God, the source of all hope!

People: Let us worship God, the source of new life!

The Opening Prayer (In Unison)

Gracious God, we come to you seeking courage and hope for the days before us. Our world is in such turmoil. Heal our wounds and strengthen the fraying fabric of our life together. Banish the darkness of ignorance and fear, and fill us with your Spirit. Empower us to be instruments of peace in our families and communities. Help us to lean on your grace that we may work for your kingdom and walk in your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***The Opening Hymn #395** “Blessed Jesus, at Your Word” *(Glory to God)*

Blessed Jesus, at your word we have come again to hear you;
Let our thoughts and hearts be stirred and in glowing faith be near you.
By your gospel true and holy, teach us, Lord, to love you solely.

All our knowledge, sense and sight lie in deepest darkness shrouded,
till your Spirit breaks our night, filling us with light unclouded.
All good thoughts and all good living come but by your gracious giving.

Glorious Lord, yourself impart, Light of Light, from God proceeding.
Touch our lips and ears and heart; help us by your Spirit's pleading.
Hear the cry your church now raises; hear, and bless our prayers and praises.

The Prayer of Confession *(In Unison)*

Loving God, your grace and mercy are ever-present in our lives. Again and again, you offer us forgiveness. Again and again, you pick us up, dust us off and help us to start anew. Yet we do not extend such grace to others. We are quick to find fault, quick to assign blame, quick to harden our hearts and hold onto grudges. You call us to forgive, but we would rather nurse our resentments. You call us to seek reconciliation, but we find it easier to walk away and pull apart. Forgive us, Lord. Help us to extend the same mercy and grace you have shown us. Empower us to live as truly forgiven people, through the grace of Christ. Amen.

A Time of Silent Confession

The Assurance of Pardon

Musical 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.

Scripture Readings

The Church in Proclamation

Portions of Matthew 18
Leader: The word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God

Special Music

“I've Got Peace like a River”
Pianist Melinda Ripper

The Micro Message

Musical Response #435 “There's a Wideness in God's Mercy” *(Glory to God)*

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea.
There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's Word,
and our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.

The Sermon

Rev. Merry Meloy

The Hymn #445

“God, How Can We Forgive”

(Glory to God)

God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn?
How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?
When human loving fails and every hope is gone,
your love gives strength beyond our own to face the dawn.

When we have missed the mark, and tears of anguish flow,
how can you still release our guilt, the debt we owe?
The ocean depth of grace surpasses all our needs.
A priest who shares our human pain, Christ intercedes.

Who dares to throw the stone to damn another's sin,
when you, while knowing all our past, forgive again?
No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.
As you, O God, forgive our sin, may we forgive.

The Church Responds

The Affirmation of Faith - Apostles' Creed *(In Unison)*

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 and 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.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 18: 15 - 35

¹⁵ “If another member of the church^[d] sins against you,^[e] go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.^[f] ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church^[g] sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven^[h] times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents^[i] was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷

And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸

But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii;^[j] and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹

Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰

But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²

Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵

So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister^[k] from your heart.”



*The flowers today are given by
Dennis and Kathy Ditch in memory of loved ones.*



*The sympathy and resurrection faith of the
congregation go out to the Stevens Family. Bob's
sister, Lynda, died on August 21, 2020.*