

Grace Presbyterian Church

February 25, 2024

9:30 am

VISION STATEMENT

We are an open and affirming congregation.

**We genuinely welcome people of all ages,
race, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations,
beliefs,
and those who are cognitively
and or physically challenged.**

Our vision is to be a community of love and purpose,
**each one engaged in ministry,
seeking to know Christ, growing in discipleship,
and embodying God's love for the world.**



Prayer Candles

Before Worship, you may offer a prayer and light a candle at the communion table.

We Gather

PRELUDE

Vince DiMura

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call to Worship

How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord of heavenly forces!

**My very being longs, even yearns,
for the Lord's courtyards.**

My heart and my body
will rejoice out loud to the living God!

**Yes, the sparrow too has found a home there;
the swallow has found herself a nest
where she can lay her young beside your altars,**
Lord of heavenly forces, my king, my God!

**Those who live in your house are truly happy;
they praise you constantly.**

Those who put their strength in you are truly happy;
pilgrimage is in their hearts.

*Hymn # 22 "God of the Sparrow"

Call to Confession

The prophets remind us that our prayer, fasting and pious ritual must be lived out in compassion and justice:

Prayer of Confession

When we forget the fast you desire—
To do justice, and stand up for the powerless:

Lord, have mercy.

When we forget the prayer you love—
To show compassion, and care for those in need:

Christ, have mercy.

When we forget the rituals you require—
To create relationships of righteousness and peace:

Lord have mercy.

Words of Assurance

Friends, the love of God revealed in Jesus
forgives us, heals us and sets us free to rebuild, restore,
and raise up foundations for new generations.

**With thanksgiving, let us live in peace and work for
justice.**

~ written by Rev. Susan A. Blain,
posted on the United Church of Christ's Worship Ways website

Hymn #544 Bless the Lord 3X (Stay seated)

We Reflect

Prayer for Understanding

Lord, we long for the gentle savior,
and you enter like a bull in a china shop,
turning over our lives,
and challenging our expectations.

Help us to be open to the radical nature of the message
you proclaim. Amen.

Reading from the Prophet Jeremiah 7:1-7

A time for Children and the Young in heart

Reading from the Gospel of Mark 11:15-19

SERMON

Rev. Deborah Paton

*Hymn #339 "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

We Respond

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is **to Know, Love, and Serve God**

Offertory Invitation

God calls us to join in your work of love in the world, and you equip us with all we need to follow your lead. Now, may we be generous of hand, heart, and mind.

Musical Meditation

Vince DiMura

Prayer of Dedication

As we return to you, O generous and gracious God, a portion of your gifts, we pray you would receive them as a sign of our gratitude for your unending love, and guide us as we offer our whole selves in your service, seeking your abundant life for all. Amen.

(Thank you to all those whose contributions and offerings sustain the church. You can give online by visiting the church website or arranging for recurring donations with your online banking).

Prayers of God's People (sharing of Joys and Concerns)

Lord, in your mercy/in thanksgiving, **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer adapted for this Lent

This beautiful and compelling rendition of the Lord's prayer was posted by the Society of the Sacred Heart.

Our God who is in heaven,
And all of us here on earth;
especially the hungry, the oppressed, the excluded.
Holy is your name.

May your reign come.

May your reign come and your will be done:

In our choice to struggle with the complexities
to confront greed and the desire for power in ourselves,
in our nation and in the global community.

May your reign come.

Give us this day our daily bread;

Bread that we are called to share,
Bread that you have given us abundantly
that we must distribute fairly, ensuring security for all.

May your reign come.

Forgive us our trespasses;

Times we have turned away from the struggles
Of other people and countries,
Times when we have thought only of our own security.

May your reign come.

Lead us not into temptation;

The temptation to close our minds, ears, and eyes
To the unfair global systems that create
larger and larger gaps between the rich and the poor;

The temptation to think it is too difficult
to bring about more just alternatives.

May your reign come.

Deliver us from evil;

The evil of a world where violence happens in your name,
Where wealth for a few is more important
than economic rights for all,
Where gates and barriers between people
are so hard to bring down
May your reign come.

**May your reign come, for yours is the kingdom,
the power and the glory forever and ever. AMEN!**

We Are Sent

*Hymn #755 "Alleluia, Laud and Blessing"

*Charge and Benediction

This is a vision of the way it can be, the way it should be—

**Shouts of welcome, a joyful procession,
a community celebrating together.**

The same vision is offered to us today:

**We can welcome Christ into our lives;
We can celebrate his transforming power.**

How swiftly things changed back then,

How swiftly we, too, can be distracted.

Let us hold fast to the vision of God's kin-dom

**Peace from the practice of justice,
equality from the practice of respect.**

Will we follow Jesus?

**We will let ourselves be overtaken by God's love
We will pour it into the world.**

— written by Jeanyne Slettom, and posted on Process and Faith.

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Peace be with you!

And also with you.

(We invite you to offer a sign of peace to those around you and as you gather for fellowship. We remind you to ask what folks feel comfortable with...a verbal greeting, a handshake or fist bump, etc. Do not assume.)

POSTLUDE

***Indicates, please stand in body or spirit.**

All songs not from Glory to God are used by permission of CCLI #1124594