

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
November 15, 2020
The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

While in-person Worship services are suspended, Montgomery Presbyterian Church will be recording services. The following is an order of service that you can use to follow along with the recorded service, or use to read and reflect on your own. The service will be posted on the church's Facebook page, on YouTube, and will be linked to the MPC website, www.mpchurch.net. Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this challenging time.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Elder of the Month: Susie Lewis, 379-6478
- Deacon of the Month: Sandra Bowen, 236-7158

CALL TO WORSHIP

150

Psalm

HYMN

Jesus Calls Us

GTG 720

*Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
of our life's wild, restless sea;
day by day his sweet voice soundeth
saying "Christian, follow me."*

*Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us,
saying "Christian, love me more."*

*In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,
"Christian, love me more than these."*

*Jesus calls us; by thy mercies,
Savior, may we hear thy call,
give our hearts to thine obedience,
serve and love thee best of all.*

CALL TO CONFESSION[†]

The religious leaders of Jesus' day had been entrusted with spreading the Word of God but Jesus criticizes them for neglecting to share this special gift fully with the people. Much has been entrusted to us - especially the good news of the Word made flesh - Jesus Christ. The more industrious we are in sharing this good news with others, the more opportunity there is for faith to increase in the lives of those who hear and respond to our witness.

Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION[†]

Merciful God, forgive us when we invest our energies into increasing our personal prosperity rather than enriching people's lives with the good news of Jesus Christ and when we squander our gifts by failing to use them to build people up.

Forgive us when we conceal the wideness of your mercy by our lack of compassionate behavior.

Forgive us when we fail to be adventurous in spreading the gospel around. Increase our capacity to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed even if this means taking risks and expending whatever energy we may have.

Help us to hear Jesus's words addressed to us about being eager to share the spiritual treasure that we have, knowing that as we do, more, much more, will be given. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

ASSURANCE OF PARDON[†]

1 Thess. 5:9-11

"God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up..." in the knowledge that in Jesus Christ we are enriched, we are loved, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit,
That in your light we may see light,
In your truth find freedom,
And in your will discover your peace;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

1 Thessalonians 5:1-

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

The Word of God for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

SECOND READING

Matthew 25:14-30

"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

The grass withers and the flower fades,

But the word of our God endures forever.

Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Taken from A Brief Statement of Faith

In life and in death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: Preaching good news to the poor, teaching by word and deed, calling all to repent and believe the Gospel.

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally good in God's image. God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.

We trust in God the Holy Spirit everywhere the giver and renewer of life. In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Savior, and to work with others for justice, freedom and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ and to live holy and joyful lives. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE[†]

Gracious God,
You are a God of hospitality;
there is none like you that invites all to come to you.
You have invited all to your home, to your table, and to your arms.
Lord, would that all would hear and receive this good news.
Lord, help us to remember
that no one is better than anyone else in your Kingdom.
Help us to then treat each other the way you treat people.

Generous God,
Because you treat us with your tender love,
We take time to pray for our friends, family members
and others who need you more than ever.
Pour out your healing on all who need it.
Be generous with your transforming love
for those who needs it in their lives.
Bring forth your reconciliation in families,
and in places where it is needed.

There is none like you God in your love, your generosity,

your gifting and your hospitality.
And we thank you that you are in our lives,
working in us and through us
to let people know your kingdom is open to all.
In the name of your Son, who opened the doors for all
and broke down barriers that kept people from you, Amen.

And now hear as we pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

BLESSING AND CHARGE

The Lord bless you and keep you
In your going out
And your coming in
From this time on
And forevermore. **Amen.**

Proclaim the good news,
Be persistent in prayer,
Do the work of the gospel,
And carry out the ministry
Of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

† Today's Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Assurance of Pardon are adapted from material published by Moira Laidlaw on Liturgies Online.

‡ Today's Prayers of the People were written by Rev Abi, and posted on Rev Abi's Long and Winding Road blog.

