

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: It is good to give thanks to God!
All: **Come to make music to our Lord and Maker.**
One: Declare God's steadfast love and faithfulness.
All: **Seek God's help in the sanctuary.**
One: Listen for the voice of God, speaking to us again.
All: **How great is our God, Mother and Father of us all!**

***OPENING HYMN** "Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth" StF 2050 *[tune #738]*

**1. Mothering God, you gave me birth
in the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.**

**2. Mothering Christ, you took my form,
offering me your food of light,
grain of life, and grape of love,
your very body for my peace.**

**3. Mothering Spirit, nurt'ring one,
in arms of patience hold me close,
so that in faith I root and grow
until I flow'r, until I know.**

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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God,
we so often miss your kingdom at work among us.
Captivated by power and prestige,
we overlook the seeds you have planted all around.
Forgive us for failing to notice
where and how you are at work.
Forgive us when we work against your plans and purposes.
Forgive us, we pray, and gently guide us back to your way.
Help us to grow in faithfulness,
Renew us with the love of Christ
so that we live no longer for ourselves,
but for Christ who became the seed of your
righteousness in us. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear the good news! There is now no condemnation for those who are
in Christ Jesus!
All: **Christ has set us free!**
One: Know you are forgiven. Rejoice in God's grace. Respond with love.
And be at peace.
All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 4:1-34

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "Sowing – and Receiving – the Seed" by Pastor Bill Vincent

*HYMN "Open My Eyes, That I May See" GtG 451

(next page...)

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!**

Words and Music (OPEN MY EYES): Clara H. Scott, 1895
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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from "*A Declaration of Faith*")

**Jesus announced the coming of God's kingdom
and its hidden presence in the midst of the world's kingdoms.
He taught his disciples to seek God's kingdom first.
We believe Christ gives us and demands of us
lives in pilgrimage toward God's kingdom.
Like Christ we may enjoy on our journey
all that sustains life and makes it pleasant and beautiful.
No more than Christ are we spared
the darkness, ambiguity, and threat of life in the world.
We are in the world, but not of the world.
Our confidence and hope for ourselves and other people
do not rest in the powers and achievements of this world,
but in the coming and hidden presence of God's kingdom.**

(continued...)

**Christ calls each of us to a life appropriate to that kingdom:
to serve as he has served us;
to take up our cross,
risking the consequences of faithful discipleship;
to walk by faith, not by sight,
to hope for what we have not seen.**

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God of life...
All: ...hear our prayer.

THE EUCHARIST

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Giver of life,
we do not want the cares of the world and the lure of wealth
to choke your word among us.
As the sower casts seeds abundantly, hopefully,
so we long to participate in your seeding of the world.
Receive these gifts as tokens of our lives.
Send your cultivating Spirit to work among us
until we yield and grow in grace,
for we pray in the name of Jesus,
who came out of love for the world. Amen.**

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord’s Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

(next page...)

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)

The Lord's Prayer (Traditional)

**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

(Please partake of each of the elements as you are served, as an expression of our personal commitment to our Lord.)

Sing "Seed, Scattered and Sown" GtG 531

Refrain:

**Seed, scattered and sown;
wheat, gathered and grown;
bread, broken and shared as one,
the living bread of God.
Vine, fruit of the land;
wine, work of our hands;
one cup that is shared by all,
the living cup, the living bread of God.**

**1. Is not the bread we break
a sharing in our Lord?
Is not the cup we bless
the blood of Christ out-poured?** *Refrain:*

(continued...)

**2. The seed which falls on rock
will wither and will die.
The seed within good ground
will flower and have life.**

Refrain:

**Seed, scattered and sown;
wheat, gathered and grown;
bread, broken and shared as one,
the living bread of God.
Vine, fruit of the land;
wine, work of our hands;
one cup that is shared by all,
the living cup, the living bread of God.**

**3. As wheat upon the hills
was gathered and was grown,
so may the church of God
be gathered into one. *Refrain:***

Words: Dan Feiten, 1987

Music: SEED SCATTERED, Dan Feiten, 1987; arr. Eric Gunnison and R.J. Miller, alt.

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Prayer

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “A Sower Came from Ancient Hills” GtG 171

**1. A Sower came from ancient hills
and cast good seed abroad:
his field, ten thousand human hearts;
his seed, the word of God.
And some who listened would not hear,
and some who heard forgot.
But some received in fertile soil
the truth the Sower taught.**

**2. A Sower walked throughout the land
and, everywhere he trod,
he sowed his life because he was
himself the Seed of God.**

(continued...)

**But then, atop a barren hill,
beneath a darkening sky,
they threw God's Seed on stony ground
and left it there to die.**

**3. The Seed was buried deep in death
beneath a blood-red sky,
and deeper still was buried hope
for those who watched him die.
But then, in Joseph's garden fair,
as dawn broke o'er the land,
the Seed, from three days' silent sleep,
awoke at God's command!**

**4. O Christ, you come among us still,
the Sower and the Seed.
As once you sowed the truth of God
in glowing word and deed,
implant your Word in waiting hearts,
and let it there take hold,
until it bears in fruitful lives
a harvest hundredfold.**

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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...

All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

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