

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP *(based on Luke 14 and Psalm 1)*

One: All who exalt themselves will be humbled.
And those who humble themselves will be exalted.
All: God welcomes us to the banquet of life.
One: God calls us to service, rather than honor.
All: God calls us to love the unknown, rather than the familiar.
One: Listen now to the voice of God and submit to God's will.
Hear the Word of God and turn away from worthless things.
All: Happy are those who delight in the Word of God.
Unison: Trusting in the grace of Jesus Christ,
We come to this time of worship.

***OPENING HYMN** "Take Up Your Cross, the Savior Said" GtG 718 [*Tune 223*]

1. Take up your cross, the Savior said,
if you would my disciple be;
take up your cross with willing heart,
and humbly follow after me.
2. Take up your cross; let not its weight
fill your weak spirit with alarm;
Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up
and brace your heart and nerve your arm.
3. Take up your cross; heed not the shame,
and let your foolish pride be still;
the Lord for you accepted death
upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.

(continued...)

4. **Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength,
and calmly every danger brave:
it guides you to abundant life
and leads to victory o'er the grave.**

Words: Charles William Everest, 1833, alt.
Music: HAMBURG, Lowell Mason, 1824
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God in Christ, who endured the cross in your own flesh for our sakes,
hear us as we confess our sin.
We would be your bold disciples,
but we fear suffering;
we would carry our cross,
but it weighs too heavily.
We count the cost of following you – as long as there are benefits;
but to renounce all we have is a devastating prospect.
Forgive the conditions we make when we try to obey,
and free us by your grace to forsake all and follow you.
In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.**

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(based on Hebrews 13)*

One: Our Lord says, “I will never fail you nor forsake you.”
So, come to Christ and there find assurance that
in confessing our sin, we are forgiven.
All: **Rejoice! For we have been reconciled to God and to one another.**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.
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 Luke 14

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON “Salt, Dinner...and a Bad Taste in Your Mouth” by Pastor Bill Vincent

***HYMN** “Jesus Calls Us” GtG 720

1. **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."**
2. **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."**
3. **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."**
4. **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.**

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1852
Music: GALILEE, William H. Jude, 1887
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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from “*A Declaration of Faith*”)

**In forming his people and sending them into the world
Jesus called individuals to be disciples.
They were to share the joy of his companionship,
to understand and obey his teachings,
and to follow him in life and death.**

He put God's claim on his life above all else.

He taught his disciples to seek God's kingdom first.

**We believe Christ gives us and demands of us
personal lives that are centered in God
and open to God's reality and rule.**

**We believe Christ gives us and demands of us
lives in pilgrimage toward God's kingdom.**

(continued...)

**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.**

**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.
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.**

“A Declaration of Faith” is Copyright 1977, 1991, the Office of the General Assembly,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); adopted (1977) “as a contemporary statement of faith, a
reliable aid for Christian study, liturgy, and inspiration, with the clear understanding that”
it is not approved as a part of the *Book of Confessions*.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God of mercy...
All: ...listen to our prayers.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**God of grace,
we give thanks for your faithfulness to us,
we give thanks for your hope in us,
we rejoice in the knowledge of your unending grace.
In the light of your mercy,
take our hearts, our hands, our gifts, Holy God.
Mold us; shape us; send us
so that we might be your body in the world,
building your love in the world,
to the honor of your name. Amen.**

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “Help Us Accept Each Other” GtG 754

- 1. Help us accept each other
as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother,
each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us
and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted,
and meant to love and live.**
- 2. Teach us, O Lord, your lessons,
as in our daily life
we struggle to be human
and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people,
for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them
or as they may become.**
- 3. Let your acceptance change us,
so that we may be moved
in living situations
to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance
until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness,
and laughter's healing art.**

(continued...)

4. Lord, for today's encounters
with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance,
for justice and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing,
new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit;
Lord, free us; make us one!

Words: Fred Kaan, 1974

Music: BARONITA, Doreen Potter, 1974

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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

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

***RESPONSE** "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" StF 2129

1. I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus
no turning back, no turning back.
2. The world behind me, the cross before me,
the world behind me, the cross before me,
the world behind me, the cross before me
no turning back, no turning back.
3. Though none go with me, still I will follow,
though none go with me, still I will follow,
though none go with me, still I will follow,
no turning back, no turning back.

Words: Anonymous

Music: ASSAM, Folk melody from India

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POSTLUDE

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