

Trinitarian Congregational Church
TakeOut
January 23, 2022

Announcements

Prelude

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”
Wyeth’s Repository of Sacred Music, 1813. Setting by John Carter

Call to Worship

Sue McGowan

Leader: From the sun’s rising to its setting, the creation speaks.

Day and night, earth’s creatures announce God’s works.

People: We gather this day to worship the Creator of life.

We lift our hands and bless the Lord.

Leader: In Jesus Christ, God speaks to us with gracious words.

God invites us to come with open ears and eager anticipation.

People: We gather to consider and understand the ways of God.

We seek to be strengthened in God’s wisdom and power.

Leader: The Spirit of God anoints us to proclaim God’s salvation.

God joins us together for ministry in Christ’s name.

People: We gather together as members of one body.

We commit ourselves to living for the glory of Christ’s name.

***Hymn**

God is Here

NCH 70 vs 1, 3

***Gathering Prayer**

Sue McGowan

We observe this day to honor you, Awesome God, to worship you with reverence and praise. You have displayed your glory in creation, and your goodness in your law. You have shown us your steadfast love in Jesus Christ and your great mercy by uniting us as one body in him. If we forget your faithful works, open our eyes to see your efforts in our world. When we discount our identity as your people remind us of the gifts you have given us for your service. Grant us a fresh anointing of your Spirit, that we may live as true disciples of Christ. Amen

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, reign without end. Amen, amen.

Scripture

1 Corinthians 12:4-13

Sue McGowan

The church at Corinth was fraught with a great deal of conflict. Paul’s intent, throughout his letter is to bring about unity in relationships and in service. In this chapter Paul is addressing a ‘pride of

place' concerning the gifts of the Spirit among the members. Paul reminds them that the same Spirit which empowered Christ, now empowers Christians for the same purpose -- fulfilling God's work in the world. Like the human body, all parts are equally necessary for the body of Christ, the church, to thrive.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. ¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Luke 4:14-21

Rosemary Dawson

The Holy Spirit is a major actor in Luke's Gospel and in its sequel, the Acts of the Apostles. Jesus is the one who is quintessentially filled with, empowered and guided by the Spirit. In this account, Jesus speaks publicly of his anointing and sending by the Spirit, and the mission he will fulfill.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. ¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Special Music:

"Church in the Wildwood"

Dr. William S. Pitts, Arr. Phillip Keveren

This week Greg turned 65. And one of his friends commented “so what do you want to be when you grow up?” Really!?! I thought, at this age we are done with that question. That’s a question for the under 20 crowd. Yet, as I thought about it, ‘what do you want to do with your life’ is a perennial question, whether you are beginning a career, entering retirement or anywhere else in life’s journey. Whatever our age, we are encouraged to follow the advice from Tom Welch- “Declare your mission; then live it!” That is good, sound advice. Know your purpose, claim your mission and give yourself to it. Spend your life for life.

Today in Scripture we see Jesus do just this. He has just begun his public ministry. He has gone to the River Jordan and been baptized. It was his way of opening himself to God’s call. And, according to the Gospels, the Holy Spirit came upon him and God’s voice claimed him. He then was driven by that same Spirit into the desert, to be tested. And he met the test.

Now he returns home in the power of the Spirit. There Jesus enters the synagogue, which is not so unusual if you think about it. But what he says is. He reads from Isaiah:

‘The Lord has put his Spirit in me,
because he has chosen me
to tell the good news to the poor.
The Lord has sent me
to announce freedom for prisoners
to give sight to the blind,
to free everyone who suffers unjustly,
and to say ‘this is the time of God’s favor’.

And then he sits down and declares ‘Today, as you listen, this scripture is being fulfilled.’

Now you may think that this is Jesus’ first sermon. But it is not. This is, simply put, his Mission Moment. This is not a list of mission projects for Jesus, rather it is his Life Mission. It is, in fact, his Manifesto. Here Jesus is claiming, in clear terms, his call and his vocation, the heart and soul that will guide his life.

His purpose was to live as God’s Anointed One, as the True Servant so richly described throughout the book of Isaiah. That role would entail a vast array of works, from preaching good news, to feeding the hungry, healing the sick, releasing the bound, liberating the oppressed, and so much more. Behind all the works Jesus engaged in was the underlying intent to bring in God’s reign, to make known “that the time of the LORD’s favor has come.”

For Jesus his whole life would be committed to bringing God’s salvation to the world. Salvation which involved body and soul and spirit. Redemption that would not only heal and help individuals but would restore all of society, from the markets to the throne room, to the altar and beyond. Jesus’ ministry would establish all that God had always desired and always sought- the full embodiment of covenant between God and people, between individuals and between nations.

That is one huge mission, wouldn't you say. And it is not just a mission for one man. Ever! What we often miss (and we really shouldn't) is that whenever God spoke, especially through the prophets, he seldom spoke just to an individual, rather he addressed all the people of God. We hear that distinctly in Paul words from 1 Corinthians. He points out to us, that each one of us, who claim faith in Christ, who have been baptized in his Church, have been anointed with God's Spirit and empowered for God's service. We are joined to Christ, that day in the synagogue. The Spirit of the Lord is upon ... Rosemary and Clayton, Sue and Randy, Gen Clark and each one of you. Why? Because the Lord has anointed... Yes, Rosemary, and Clayton, Sue, Randy, Gen and you.... to fulfill God's mission.

That is good news, that is something we can celebrate. That is something we can sink our teeth into. And, as you know, we have been pursuing it faithfully for some time. We are striving, praise God, and thank you, to understand and take hold of God's mission for us, right here and right now, just as we are.

The good news is that we are making progress. There has been a small group of appointed and anointed folks who have been working with a coach to frame our own manifesto, something akin to Jesus' manifesto. And indeed, it resonates with the whole Jesus' mission. We are not yet done, but with such a great passage from Jesus' life to reflect on, I am going to tell you what we have identified thus far. And I ask you to reflect on these thoughts, to see if they ring true for this church.

“We are a church committed to community,
to love and welcome all to the feast of God,
nourishing body and soul.”

Those are my words for the work we are doing. I have learned that food and feeding have a long and honored place in this church. And behind that love of food (good as it is) is the joy of true community, to love and care and support one another, not just here in the church, but throughout Northfield and beyond.

That seems to me to be a genuine mission, a mission that reflects the heart of God, and points us to the purposes of God. How does it seem to you? Seriously, let me or the members know – Sue, Gwen, Heather, Pat, and Michele. We are waiting to hear from you.

So now, let all God's people say – Amen.

***Hymn**

Called as Partners in Christ's Service

NCH 495 vs 1, 2

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

Faithful God, we thank you for your good and loving intent for this world. We thank you that from the beginning you have sought a world of wholeness for all of creation. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who gave his life to bring about the day of fulfillment. And we thank you for the Spirit, who continues his great mission through our simple lives. We long to know and do our part in your reign, O God, and so we come seeking your guidance and power.

We pray for your church and for this congregation. Encourage our hearts with your promise, open our eyes with your vision and enliven our spirits with your call. Grant us new understanding and a fresh commitment to your particular will for us here in Northfield and throughout our world, that we may be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

We pray for all who lead this world. Grant them the hope, wisdom and power they need that they may uphold your justice and peace among the nations. We pray also for all who are suffering today. May your promises of restoration be known to all who are in need. Grant your healing to the ill, your comfort to the sorrowful, and your abundance to the poor. We especially lift up... and we thank you for...

We praise you, Glorious God, for all your mercy, love and goodness towards us, through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

The Lord's Prayer

Choral Response

Remember Me

Offering

We have received the good news of Jesus Christ, and the anointing of God's Spirit. Now we are invited to join in God's mission, to do our part in establishing God's good will on earth, and share the many blessings of God with those around us. Let us dedicate our gifts with joy.

For your abundant goodness to us we give you thanks, gracious God. For your precious mercy in Christ, your empowering Spirit among us, your vital gifts within us, and your authentic ministry through us we are profoundly grateful. Receive now our gifts and use them to your holy purpose. Amen.

Doxology

(choose the one that is best for your faith)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise him all creatures here below,
praise him above ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that Love has done; Creator, Christ and Spirit One. Amen

***Hymn**

God of Grace and God of Glory

NCH 436 vs 1,5

***Common Commission**

Let us go forth into the world in peace, being of good courage, holding fast to that which is good, rendering to no one evil for evil, strengthening the faint-hearted, supporting the weak, helping the afflicted, honoring all persons, loving and serving the Lord, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

***Benediction**

Go now into the world

And may God make you worthy of your high calling; may God fulfill in you every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:11b-12 adj

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Postlude

“Wondrous Love”, Walker’s Southern Harmony, 1843

music provided by Chris Harris and Lynne Walker