

First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

1400 John Fitch Highway Fitchburg, MA 01420 Phone# 978-345-5622

August 9th, 2020, 10th Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor: Marquis Lockhart

Song Leader: Diane Hope



Welcome and Announcements:

Good morning Congregation. I pray that you are each well and blessed as I prepare for my last week of summer camp service for Oceanwood Camp and Conference Center. God is moving on His property. His Spirit has inspired the director, Kasandra Kane, to form a new program that will minister to children by offering them a safe space to receive hands on learning from educators here on God's property for the fall semester.

I ask that you pray for the Lord to bless this endeavor, each one of His precious children who attend as they seek peace, and wisdom in this healthy environment, and that staff that will be called to this new challenge.

It is my privilege to introduce you to my dear friend and brother in Christ, Marquis Lockhart. I am confident of the Lord's work through him and am sure that you will be well fed the Word of God today through God's Spirit.

Of course you are most welcome to share your concerns and celebrations with myself or your deacons, who can forward them to me directly. My email is meredithchristian@gmail.com and phone is (774) 276-0505.

Call to Worship: (Neville Yangsi)

Leader: Sometimes we get the feeling that we are the only ones that the Lord loves.

People: Open our hearts to see all the people who are loved by the Lord.

Leader: We want Jesus to be our sole possession.

People: But Jesus reaches out to all others in need.

Leader: Lord, forgive our selfishness.

People: Open our hearts to find healing and restoration that we might be better disciples. AMEN.

Invocation:

Heavenly Father, we stand in awe of Your awesome power that has been on display since the beginning of time Through You all things were made and by You all things have their being. We come before you in thanksgiving and with hearts that long to adore and worship You alone. Lord, we ask that we may we know the presence of the Holy Spirit today. May we be open to Your leading, sensitive to Your speaking and alert to Your calling. Father, we invite the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead to be at work with us here and now. We declare with all that we are that You are welcome here. 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
world without end. Amen, Amen.*

Hymn: “Take My Life and Let It Be” (Click on link->)

<https://youtu.be/lQ93HVuYd5Y>

First Reading: *Psalm 145:1-13*

“I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They tell of the power of your awesome works—and I will proclaim your great deeds. They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; He has compassion on all He has made. All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.”

Celebrations and Concerns:

May we lift up in prayer the people of Beirut, Lebanon and pray for healing and peace in their situation.

Please pray for students, parents, teachers, and school leadership as they seek a safe and sensible way forward in this next academic year.

May we praise God for granting wisdom to scientists in Israel, who have started a human trial for a Covid-19 vaccine this week that has thus far been successful in hamsters as we pray for continued prayers for healing within our congregation, neighborhood, region, country, and world.

Silent Prayer: Let us take our silent petitions before the Lord.

Pastoral Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks and praise for this congregation that is pursuing You in spite of the difficulties that are plaguing our state, country, and world because they know that You are bigger than it all. We praise You for the progress that has been made with the COVID-19 vaccine trials. We pray that you would continue to give wisdom to the individuals responsible for the major decisions that affect us all, including the most vulnerable among us. We also pray for the areas of Massachusetts and the rest of the world that have seen a resurgence of cases. We ask that you would give us a grace for healing and restoration in this time.

God, we know that You love us. So, we stand in faith that we will see Your goodness manifested in our families, our homes, our communities, and the nations represented here today. Your Word tells us that every good thing comes from You, so give us the patience and faithfulness to remain in You until Your goodness is realized even now as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray,

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.

Children's Message: (Offered by Debi Cross)

Time Out

Good morning. I want to start by asking everyone a question and I want you all to be very honest and tell the truth – put your hand up if you are a perfect child. If you never get into trouble, if you’ve never done anything wrong, if you’ve never disobeyed Mom or Dad – put your hand up.

No one? Not one of you huh? Well, thank you for your honesty. It’s just human nature isn’t it to sometimes do something wrong. None of us are perfect are we? Let me ask all the adults shall I – are any of you perfect? See, adults aren’t perfect either. So if you’re not perfect, I’m sure that means you’ve probably been in trouble a few times haven’t you. Maybe you even had to do something we call ‘time out’ right. Have any of you been put in

‘time out’? Maybe you have to sit on a special chair ‘the naughty chair’ or the bottom step of the stairs. Maybe you even have to go to your room. Do any of you have to do that sometimes?

Do you remember the story about a man named Jonah who disobeyed God and didn’t do what God asked him to. Does anyone remember what happened to him? That’s right. Jonah was swallowed up by a big fish and was stuck inside that fish for three whole days. Did you ever consider that God might have been putting Jonah in ‘time out’?

The reason we get put into ‘time out’ when we don’t behave properly or we’re in trouble for doing something wrong, and that we have time to really think about what we did. Sometimes Mom or dad or maybe even your teacher might say ‘You need to think about what you just did’ or perhaps they’ll say, ‘You need to think about how sorry you are’. And that’s why they send us off to ‘time out’ so that we have TIME to think about the way we behaved.

Now, as I said before, your ‘time out’ might be on a chair, or a step or a carpet or even perhaps in the corner, and you probably only have to spend two or three minutes there, maybe a few more. But Jonah upset God so much by disobeying him that he had to spend three whole days inside the tummy of that big fish. I’m sure it was very nasty in there. But Jonah didn’t just sit inside that fish doing nothing. He took the time to think about what he had done. And he decided to pray to God. He thanked God for all he had done for him, and for saving him when he was drowning and he praised God.

I don’t think any of you will end up inside the belly of a big fish for three days to do ‘time out’ but if you end up on the ‘naughty chair’ or get sent to your room for a few minutes to think about what you did, I want you to use that time wisely. Do what Jonah did. Talk to God! Say your prayers. Tell him how thankful you are for everything he does for you and ask him to help you behave better next time.

Let’s pray: Dear God, thank you for loving us and caring for us so much. Help us to take ‘time out’ of our day to remember you and all that you do for us. In your name we pray. Amen.

Blessing of the Tithes, Offerings and Gifts:

Father, we thank you for all of the many blessings realized and unrealized that You have provided. We ask that You would receive every cent given today as a symbol of our faith that You would grow the ministry done through this church for the expansion of Your kingdom and the blessing of Your people. We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

(Tithes, offerings, and gifts are greatly appreciated as a means to continue to care for our facilities, the needs of each other, and our local and worldwide community. We thank you for your pledges at this time and ask that you [Please Pray over your gifts](#) and mail them to the church at [1400 John Fitch Hwy, Fitchburg MA 01420](#)).

Doxology:

*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.*

Sermon Text: *Matthew 15:29-31*

“Compassion-Led Kingdom”

Today, I want to talk to you about the kingdom of God. Often times, when people hear the phrase “Kingdom of God,” they think that means heaven, the place you go when you die. But when I say, “kingdom of God,” I’m talking about the visible display of God’s love, power, and goodness.

Jesus displayed the kingdom many times throughout scripture like when he healed the sick, turned water into wine, and raised the dead. It was all done to display God's love & power and to bless people. The Apostle Paul even tells us in 1 Corinthians "the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power." Our Bible passage today tells of a time when Jesus released the Kingdom of God to a crowd of thousands of people

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 15:29-31*

"Jesus went on from there and walked beside the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain and sat down there. And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel"

Jesus went up on a mount side, sat down, and crowds of people came to Him. What's interesting is that Jesus didn't go there to put on a church service, a Christian conference, or a worship music concert. He was just sitting down and people were drawn to Him. Why? Because Jesus had a reputation for being a healer and helping people.

In other words, Jesus had a reputation for displaying the kingdom of God. Churches, whether gathering in-person or remotely, hold a church service every single Sunday, a publicized opportunity for people to meet Jesus, but often times they come and all they meet is us. We have to stop focusing on getting people in the seats and start focusing on getting people into the presence of Jesus.

It's in the presence of Jesus that people are changed, they are healed, they are set free, and they discover their true identity as sons and daughters of the living God. What would happen if we started to redesign all our gatherings and events around the goal of experiencing Jesus. I'll tell you: we also would garner a reputation for healing people, helping people, and displaying the kingdom of God. When that happens, we won't have to worry about getting people in the seats, they'll come from miles around just to experience the Jesus everyone will be talking about.

So, when the people showed up in the thousands to Jesus, they came expecting to get something from Jesus. You know what it's called when you come to Jesus with expectation? That's called faith. The Bible says that they brought the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others. Jesus could have turned them away and said, "You know, I can turn water into wine, I can walk on water, but healing blind people is a bit out my league. Y'all are gonna have to go to someone else." But He didn't do that; He stood in obedience to the moment the Father had Him in and the result is that hundreds, probably thousands, of people were healed. You and I know people (friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, even strangers) who need a touch from God — who need God's healing hand in their life. And, believe it or not, it's part of God's design that they receive that healing through your prayers and your hands.

I heard a story about a pastor from Colorado who had just preached the Gospel in Africa where he saw God do extraordinary miracles. He was flying back home on a plane when God laid on his heart that the woman across the aisle hurt her back two weeks prior and needed prayer. The pastor, wanting to be obedient to God, leaned over and asked the woman if she had hurt her back two weeks ago.

Surprised, she said, "Yes! How did you know that?" The pastor said, "God speaks to me sometimes. I just got back from preaching the Gospel in Africa where I saw God do extraordinary things. Would it be okay if I prayed for you?" The woman agreed, the pastor prayed for the woman, she ends up on the floor under the power of God. Just then, the stewardess was walking down the aisle and saw the woman on the floor. She asked, "Is everything okay. Do I need to call for a doctor?"

As the pastor tries to explain to the stewardess, the woman on the floor gets up and says, “This is a man of God. He just got back from Africa where he preached the Gospel and saw God do extraordinary things. I hurt my back two weeks ago ice skating and he prayed for me and God completely healed my back.” The stewardess paused for a moment and then said, “I’ve had this problem in my right knee. Could you pray for me.” The pastor prayed for her and after praying, he looked up and saw three people lined up in the aisle waiting to receive prayer.

So, he prayed for the first person in line and all of a sudden he hears the stewardess that he prayed for a moment ago over the plane’s intercom saying, “Ladies and gentleman, we have a man of God on the plan. He just got back from preaching the Gospel in Africa where he saw God do all sorts of extraordinary things. He just prayed for a woman with a back injury who just got healed. He prayed for my knee and I just got healed. If you need a miracle in your body, meet him between First Class and Economy and he will pray for you.”

It’s time we started displaying the kingdom. You might be thinking, “Marquis, I don’t know how to heal people. I’ve never done that before.” Our responsibility is to simply stand in obedience and speak God’s love & power over their circumstance. Wherever you see signs of the work the enemy, just be obedient. See, Jesus came that all might have life and have it to the full. But Satan came to steal, kill, and destroy. Disease, sickness, destruction, hate... all the work of the enemy. Just be obedient and pray for God to move. You might say, “I just have the faith for that.” Bill Johnson said, “Since when did your faith limit God. He’s looking for a willing vessel. Pray beyond your faith. Give Him a chance to be extraordinary.”

What was the result of Jesus healing all those people? The Bible says, “The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.” Our goal in displaying the kingdom is that people would know what God is like and worship Him as the one, true God. The healing, the miracle, then becomes a critical part of their testimony of how they came to faith or came back to God. Let your compassion for people move you to pray and believe for God to move in their lives. Amen.

Hymn: “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” (Click on link) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1Y8Naj3RFk>

Benediction:

“The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.”

May the Lord bless and keep you all.



(Tim Tebow Leads Prayers, Helps Family on Delta Flight During Medical Emergency)

Works Cited: Bible verses in citations *New International Version* unless otherwise listed.

Post from Richard V. Gotti on Facebook. Patton, Julie Brown. June 16, 2016. *The Gospel Herald Life* <<https://www.gospelherald.com/articles/64960/20160628/tim-tebow-leads-prayers-helps-family-on-delta-flight-during-medical-emergency.htm>>