

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

July 2, 2023

10:30 a.m. Worship



With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

--Colossians 3:16b

First Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: PO Box 2729; San Bernardino, California 92406

909.882.3308

www.fpcsb.net

COMMISSIONED LOCAL PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: CURTISS ALLEN, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC;

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST; AMY GANO, BELLS

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

Large-print copies of this order of service, as well as audio enhancement devices are available from the ushers.

We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community** – rejoice w/those who rejoice, weep w/those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

Information on our common life can be found on our website www.fpcsb.net, along with sermons and newsletters. You can participate in our work by supporting us financially with a one-time or sustaining donation.

Children are welcome in worship. Younger children may go to the Nursery at any time.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, August 6th.

Morning Worship†

This week is our annual singing Sunday, where we sing our praise, our prayers, and our worship. There are many ways to sing: traditional hymns, spirituals, brief refrains, and songs of praise from cultures other than our own. Some have words connected to scripture, some are familiar, some are in languages other than English. Today we will sing favorite hymns from the hymnal. You will have the opportunity to call out a favorite hymn from the hymnal. For those who are curious, contextual notes about the hymns can be found at the bottom of the hymnal pages.

This service will not be livestreamed due to licensing concerns and the nature of the service.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME to HYMN SING SUNDAY

PRELUDE

*Reflections on
"Jesus Loves Me"*

W. Zeitler

Allow the music to usher you into sacred space and time.

CALL to WORSHIP

Let the words of the hymn call us to worship.

We begin with "Come All You People" and then we will take requests from the hymnal from the congregation.

We will sing one or two verses of each hymn.

*HYMN 388

Come All You People

USAI MOSE

WE SING our WORSHIP

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 3:12-17

New Testament p. 201

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

WE SING our WORSHIP

† The symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

* Stand if you are able ✘ The congregation will read.

GREETERS: Phyllis Hough, Meryll Davis

USHERS: Jim Siegmund, *Lead Usher*

Rick Rodriguez, Marilyn Kraft, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Ann Aguilera, Ruth Alexander, Marianna Fowles

Elders: Martha Pinckney, Lily Bolaños, Margaret Doane

Deacons: Dave Thomas, Steve Smith, Rebecca Allen

This Weeks' Celebrations

Jul 3 Mario Bolaños
 Brett Valentine
 Phil & Lynda Savage

Jul 6 Judy Etherton
 Dennis Stafford

Jul 7 Merry Beth Grindahl
 Jim & Dawn Morris

Jul 8 Josie Babcock

The Music Box

One feature of Judaism is that the name of God is so holy that it shouldn't even be spoken – 'YHWH' in particular. The Hebrew alphabet only has consonants (with a few sort-of exceptions) and you 'just know' from knowing the language which vowels to use. Modern Hebrew still works this way. (A system that obviously works for them!) In English some have added vowels to turn YHWH into "YaHWeH". And JeHoVaH' is another English-ization of YHWH with its own curious history.

Part of the problem is that YHWH in Hebrew looks like a misspelled form of the verb 'to be' – it's a lexically problematic word, so what vowels do you add? As you can imagine this is an area of considerable debate in the Hebrew scholar community. My only point is that YHWH is not a settled and straightforward word even in the original Hebrew. Meanwhile, when Jews read their Scriptures, and come to the sacred name YHWH, instead they say 'ADONAI' ('Master'), 'HASHEM' ('The Name') or 'ELOHIM' (another name for God).

Some Jews go so far as to say that even the generic word 'God' shouldn't be used either. And we see an artifact of this in the New Testament! The Gospel of Matthew clearly has Jews as its primary audience, and it always refers to "The Kingdom of Heaven", whereas the other three gospels refer to "the Kingdom of God". (Note: in the Greek it's always "the Kingdom of the Heavens" – plural 'heavens'. I don't understand why translators invariably translate it as singular when it's plural in the Original.)

A particularly interesting body of ancient literature is the "Jewish Magical Papyri". These were written during the Second Temple Period: the first temple that Solomon built was destroyed when the Babylonians conquered Israel (c. 600 BCE), and a second one was built when the Jews returned to Israel (c. 500 BCE) until it was destroyed again by Titus in 70 CE. Thus Jesus lived in the Second Temple Period. Although magic was forbidden by Levitical law in the Hebrew Bible, it was widely practiced in the late Second Temple period, and is particularly well documented after the destruction of the temple into the 3rd, 4th, and 5th centuries C.E. Jewish and Samaritan magicians appear in the New Testament (see the Acts of the Apostles), and also in the works of the Jewish historian Josephus (c. 37 CE to c. 100). The idea of Jewish magic was to use the name of God – especially YHWH – in magical incantations for healing and such – amulets with magical inscriptions were especially popular. One of the ways they transliterated Hebrew YHWH into Greek was IAΩ – iota, alpha, omega. One wonders if there's a connection between this and "I am the Alpha and Omega" in the Book of Revelation.

The Septuagint was an important translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek done around 300 BCE. In it they 'translate' YWHW sometimes using the Greek word for 'Lord' (KURIOS), sometimes by putting the Hebrew word YHWH ("יהוה") in the Greek text (which would make Psalm 23 begin "יהוה" is my shepherd, I shall not want.), and sometimes as IAΩ.

My point is that the ancients had a deep reverence for the name of God, and held it in special awe and mystery. Something we don't really do today in Christendom. I wonder if our more casual use of the name of God has something to do with our modern egalitarian idea that 'everyone is equal' – "all men/[& women] are created equal", and without thinking about it we apply that same notion to our relationship with God as well. After all, in the view of some, God works for US: His 'job' is to make us healthy, wealthy, and happy – if only we have enough 'faith'. (And if you're not healthy, wealthy and happy, well that's YOUR fault for not having enough faith. Let's see: in this view, if things are going well, God gets the credit. But if not, WE get the blame! Nice!)

I wonder if 'paradox' is a better approach. Truly God is closer to us than our own breath. But S/He is also the creator of a Cosmos that will forever exceed our comprehension. It is tempting when confronting paradox to want to pick one side, run with that, and ignore the other. But that always gets us in trouble – closing our eyes to a big swath of Reality always does. Better, methinks, is to hold both sides of that seeming contradiction – God is both Intimate and Infinitely Beyond Us at the same time. And chalk up the seeming contradiction to the profound finiteness of our human minds.

--William Zeitler