

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 8, 2024 10:30 a.m. Worship



Peter Koenig, *The Daughter of the Canaanite Woman*

They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

--Mark 7:37

First Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: P.O. Box 2729; San Bernardino, California 92406

909.882.3308

www.fpcsb.net

COMMISSIONED PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN W. SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

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

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST;

AMY GANO, BELLS

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

This service is being livestreamed and can be viewed on our YouTube channel in real time or as a recording. **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, October 6th.

Morning Worship†

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

This ordinary time is gifted in its quiet, marked passing
Christ slips about calling and baptizing,
sending and affirming,
pouring his Spirit like water into broken cisterns,
sealing cracks and filtering our senses,
that we may savor the foolish simplicity of his grace.

Enuma Okoro, *Passing Ordinary Time*

Today we are celebrating the beginning of the KidSpace and educational year with Breakfast Church! Please feel free to munch while we worship. If you need something, you may get up and get it.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE *Reflections on 'Yes, Jesus Loves Me'*

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

INTROIT *Open My Eyes, That I May See* *Clara H. Scott*

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!

*CALL to WORSHIP

Praise the Lord!

✠ **Sing to the Lord a new song,
sing praise among the faithful.**

Let the people of God be glad;

✠ **let us rejoice, dance, and sing.**

For the Lord rejoices in the people;

✠ **God gives glory to the humble of heart.**

Let us worship God.

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

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

WE SING TOGETHER

*(Curtiss leads us campfire style
as we sing fun and familiar church school songs.)*

PRAYER of CONFESSION¹

- ✘ Almighty and compassionate God,
every day, in our desire to
attain our wants,
avoid discomfort,
and dismiss those we do not know or love,
we show ourselves to be unworthy of your gifts of life. Of this we
are sorely aware,
and we ask your power to renew us in body and spirit, that we
will be able, through your help,
to walk in the way you intend for us.

(Moment for silent reflection and confession)

- ✘ Forgive us and lead us, in Jesus' name. Amen.

*(We remain seated for the kyrie, an ancient song of the church. We will sing
it through in Greek first and then in English.)*

577 Lord, Have Mercy

Musical notation for the first system of 'Lord, Have Mercy'. It consists of a vocal line in G major, 4/4 time, and a bass line. The vocal line has two lines of lyrics: 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.' and 'Lord, _____ have mer - cy. Lord, _____ have mer - cy.' The bass line provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

Note: Lower voices may hum.

Musical notation for the second system of 'Lord, Have Mercy'. It continues the vocal and bass lines from the first system. The vocal line includes a triplet of eighth notes in the final phrase. The lyrics are: 'Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.' and 'Lord, _____ have mer - cy. Lord, _____ have mer - cy.' The bass line continues with harmonic support.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Dinah Reindorf, 1987; arr. Sing! A New Creation, 2001
Music © 1987 Dinah Reindorf
Music Arr. © 2001 Faith Alive Christian Resources

KYRIE ELEISON (Reindorf)

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ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Just as Jesus made the deaf to hear and the mute to speak, our merciful God lifts our burdens from us, removes the failures of our past, and turns us to new life.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

✘ **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and are being made whole. Amen.**

(We stand and sing Alleluia)

*ALLELUIA

William Zeitler

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le al - le - lu - ia!

TIME with the CHILDREN

[Children are always welcome in worship. After the time with Children, we invite our children ages 4 to 11 to go to KidSpace in Room 11. Parents, please pick your children up immediately following worship. Infants through pre-Kindergarten may go to the Nursery at any time.]

ANTHEM

*Let It Shine!*²

arr. Don Besig

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, gonna light up the whole wide world, gonna let it shine, shine, shine, shine. You have a light like mine, you've gotta make it shine. You have a light like mine, you've gotta let it shine. You have a light like mine, you've gotta let it shine. You can light up the whole wide world if you let it shine, gotta let it shine! I can be a beacon of light shining through the night. I can see a brand new sight, shining clear and bright. With this light of mine, gonna make, gonna make things fine, Gonna let it shine, gonna let it shine! Come put your hand in mine, let's make the whole world shine. We can light up the whole wide world, we can make it shine! We can be a beacon of light shining through the night. We can see a brand-new sight, shining clear and bright. These lights of yours and mine, gonna make, gonna make things fine. Gonna make it shine, gonna make it shine!

SUNG PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

451

Open My Eyes, That I May See

Clara H. Scott

✘ **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.**

² Traditional spiritual. Text: Additional lyrics, Nancy Price. Music: arr. Don Besig ©1993 Shawnee Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission of ONELICENSE #A706254.

**Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears; illumine me, Spirit divine!**

SCRIPTURE

Mark 7:24-37

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Christ Slips About

Pastor Wendy Lamb

HYMN 462

I Love to Tell the Story

HANKEY

THE OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We offer our tithes and gifts to be part of God's purposes in the world, and we invite you to take part. You may place your offering in the plates as they are passed. You may always send gifts by mail or online.)

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

- ✘ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE, OUR LORD'S PRAYER

- ✘ 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.

*HYMN 762

When the Poor Ones

CAMINO

*MOMENT for REFLECTION

*CHARGE and BENEDICTION

RESPONSE

Open My Eyes, That I May See

Clara H. Scott

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!

POSTLUDE

Hymn

GREETERS: Jeoff Molcan, Meryll Davis

USHERS: Lynn Usher, *Lead Usher*

Tim Usher, *Security Usher*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: Oliver Lamb

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Marianna Fowles, Sandy Garza, Jim Huffstutler

Elders: Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis, Amy Smith

Deacons: Rebecca Allen, Brad Smith, Dave Thomas

Pastor Nominating Committee:

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher

This Weeks' Celebrations

Sep 8 Deon Garcia

Sep 9 Harry Babcock

Jeanne Clark

Larry & Melodee Kistner

Rosalind & Ken Mantei

Shelby Obershaw

Ramon & Penny Ramirez

Sep 10 Judy Steppins

Christian Usher

Sep 11 Jane Snyder

Sep 12 Laurie Stafford

Kelsey Smith

News and announcements are available in your Friday *Keeping in Touch* emails. If you are not receiving these, and you would like to, contact Mimi in the church office.

Cover Art: Koenig, Peter. *The Daughter of the Canaanite Woman*, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58530> [retrieved September 4, 2024]. Original source: Peter Winfried (Canisius) Koenig, <https://www.pwkoenig.co.uk/>

Music Box

Last week we met Dr. Donald Hoffman, a cognitive scientist (Ph.D. From MIT) and professor at UC Irvine. He aims to bridge the gap between theoretical physics and neuroscience. (Yikes!) He argues that from an evolutionary point of view, Nature has given her creatures just enough intelligence to survive and no more. This is because intelligence has a high cost: it consumes energy – and lots of it. Instead, creatures who can get by on fewer calories have better odds of survival – better able to survive long stretches between meals. Therefore we're likely 'just smart enough to survive' and little more.

Hoffman goes on to argue that we have no reason to suppose that the perceptual apparatus we have (for seeing, hearing, etc.) gives us a true representation of 'reality'. He argues that from a caloric consumption point of view, our brains likely present to us a 'dumbed-down' version of what's really out there. Barely good enough for us to get by, to survive, but little more.

Last week we observed that we get by seeing color with only three receptors in our eyes –Red, Green, and Blue – and that our brains fabricate the rest of the colors we see. Yet one could argue that we still perceive 'reality' as it essentially is, just colorized. But Hoffman argues that the way our brain 'fabricates' an experience of reality may not stop at color at all – it may go far deeper. That we have no reason at all to be certain that our perception of reality has much relationship to what's really there at all.

He uses the metaphor of the computer desktop. When you drag a file into a folder on your computer screen, millions of 1's and 0's and electromagnetic fields and electrical charges inside the computer are set into motion with a complexity that defies comprehension. To begin with, a 'file' on your computer hard disk is lots of one's and zero's scattered all over your disk drive – generally they're not even grouped together. Then when you 'move' a file on your computer desktop, the 1's and 0's inside the computer are reconfigured as if your file moved – which doesn't resemble movement in the physical world at all.

Hoffman argues that our experience of Reality might be like that – that what we experience is like a 'computer desktop' with icons and such that simplify reality down to a level we can manage.

Meanwhile, the computer desktop is indeed strongly connected to the maelstrom of 1's and 0's inside a computer – there's definitely a strong connection between our interactions with the desktop and what goes on

inside the computer. But what happens on the desktop, and what goes on inside the computer bear almost no apparent resemblance to each other.

Is Hoffman right? I don't know. I think some of his arguments are rather compelling – like arguing that from the point of evolution, our species is probably barely smart enough to survive (like every other species with a brain). And that we may be kidding ourselves when we're confident we have a 'true' and 'deep' perception of Reality. Maybe yes, maybe not. Meanwhile, Hoffman has certainly expanded the aperture of the imagination!

Why does all this matter? For one thing, Hoffman reminds us yet again that we humans may not be as smart as we like to think we are. (As if we need more evidence of that – see the six o'clock news!) Once again, a little Humility serves us well.

Secondly, he reminds us that our minds routinely simplify things to make them manageable – by design. But this can go awry when we simplify too far. For example, isn't that what bigotry is: the idea that something as simplistic as skin color automatically tells you all that's important about a person?

And finally, he reminds us that what may seem like 'settled fact' may not be so at all. If even 'space' and 'time' aren't settled fact, what else isn't? Or how much of what we experience is oversimplified by our brains for our benefit? Meaning that many of our most strident disagreements may be the equivalent of children arguing about Dr. Seuss books.

How many 'settled facts' about ourselves are false? Of what is humanity really capable? Of what am I really capable? When I seem stuck – what 'unchangeable' factor might be changeable after all?

I'm reminded of this quip:

“It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so.” - Mark Twain

So when things are tough, or seem hopeless, I find hope in the idea that the Cosmos is much bigger, and much more Mysterious than my tiny brain can grasp.

-- William Zeidler



The seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a symbolic statement of the church's heritage, identity, and mission in contemporary form. Its power depends on both its simplicity and complexity, as well as its traditional and enduring qualities.

The basic symbols in the seal are the cross, Scripture, the dove, and flames.

As a church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregational life is governed by the Ruling Elders of our current Session:

Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Pat Morris, Martha Pinckney, Lily Bolaños, Margaret Doane, Jon Horstmann, Phyllis Hough, Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Rebecca Allen, Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Rick Rodriguez, Katie Smith, Brad Smith, Dave Thomas, Chris Wright-Thomas, Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

In this time of change for our congregation, a Pastor Nominating Committee has been elected by the congregation:

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher,
Brian Gano, Kendra Lamb, Jim Morris,
Shelby Obershaw, Christa Wallis, Neal Williams