

Living Stones

“You yourselves are being built like living stones into a spiritual temple.” (1 Peter 2.5)

Mason First Presbyterian Church

To be added to or removed from this list, please notify Bill.

JULY 26, 2020 +++ 8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I encourage you to set aside some time today for personal worship using these or other resources.

An audio recording of this entire service is available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.

You are welcome to share this with your friends.

Prayer of the Day

Eternal God, protector of all who put their trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Fill us with your mercy and your grace, that, with you to rule and guide, we may so use the good things of this present life that we do not neglect those of eternal worth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Call to Worship

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Lord upholds those who are falling;

God raises those who are bowed down.

If God is for us, who can be against us?

Nothing can separate us from God's love.

Let us worship God!

(Romans 1:7; Psalm 145:14; Romans 8:31, 39)

Hymn: “How Great Thou Art”

(Printed music and a simple recording of this hymn is available [here](#).)

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!"

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

(lyrics by Stuart K. Hine, 1953)

Call to Confession

If we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.
But when we confess our sins,
God who is faithful and just
will forgive us our sins
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *(1 John 1:8-9)*

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession

For failing to love others as you have loved us ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

For wasting your gifts and hoarding our goods ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

For plundering the earth and abusing the planet ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

For fearing those who are strange to us
and ignoring those in need ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

For losing heart and abandoning hope ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

For all the ways we turn from you ...
God of grace, *forgive us.*

(Silent prayers of confession)

We offer our prayers in the name
of the One who saves us,

Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Assurance of Pardon

Because we were buried with Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are also raised to life with him. (*Colossians 2:12*)

Believe the gospel!
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

Hymn: “When Peace Like a River”

(*Printed music and a simple recording of this hymn is available [here.](#)*)

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well (it is well) with my soul (with my soul);
it is well; it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
and hath shed his own blood for my soul.

It is well (it is well) with my soul (with my soul);
it is well; it is well with my soul.

He lives: O the bliss of this glorious thought.
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

It is well (it is well) with my soul (with my soul);
it is well; it is well with my soul.

Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul.

It is well (it is well) with my soul (with my soul);
it is well; it is well with my soul.

(*lyrics by Horatio G. Spafford, 1876, alt.*)

Prayers of Intercession

God of all kindness,
you gave your only Son,
because you loved the world so much.

We pray for the peace of the world.

Move among us by your Spirit,
break down barriers
of fear, suspicion, and hatred.
Heal the human family of its divisions
and unite it in the bonds of justice and peace.

We pray for our country.
Enrich our common life;
strengthen the forces of truth and goodness;
teach us to share prosperity,
that those whose lives are impoverished
may pass from need and despair
to dignity and joy.

We pray for those who suffer.
Surround them with your love,
support them with your strength,
console them with your comfort,
and give them hope
and courage beyond themselves.

We pray for our families,
for those whom we love.
Protect them at home;
support them in times of difficulty and anxiety,
that they may grow together
in mutual love and understanding,
and rest content in one another.

We pray for the Church.
Keep us true to the gospel
and responsive to the gifts and needs of all.
Make known your saving power in Jesus Christ,
by the witness of our faith, our worship, and our life. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

As Jesus teaches us, let us pray
to the God who gives us birth:

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.*

Invitation to Offering

Present yourselves as a living sacrifice,

holy and acceptable to God. (*Romans 12:1*)
Let us return to God the offerings of our life
and the gifts of the earth.

Offertory Response: “Praise, God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” (Trinity version)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

(lyrics by Neil Weatherhogg, 1988)

Prayer for Illumination

Speak to us, living God,
as you have spoken to our ancestors:
through the voices of your prophets,
the breath of your Spirit,
and the life of your Son,
so that we may live according to your word;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

Old Testament Lesson: Genesis 29:15-28

(Jacob has fled from his brother Esau, who wants to kill him because he stole Esau’s birthright. Jacob has made his way to his ancestral homeland in Mesopotamia, to the home of his uncle Laban.)

Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah’s eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

Psalms 105:1-11, 45b

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered,
O offspring of his servant Abraham,

children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
He is mindful of his covenant forever,
of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,
the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance."

Praise the Lord!

New Testament Lesson: Romans 8:26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

(Jesus is speaking to his disciples in parables.)

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Anthem: “Holy Spirit” (featuring Gabriel’s Oboe from The Mission)

An audio recording of the anthem – performed by Deb Melse, Sophia Levchenko, and Hrant Bagrazyan - is available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.

Holy Spirit, living Breath of God, breathe new life into my willing soul;
Bring the presence of the Risen Lord to renew my heart and make me whole.
Cause Your Word to come alive in me; give me faith for what I cannot see.
Give me passion for Your purity; Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.

Holy Spirit, come abide within; may Your joy be seen in all I do.
Love enough to cover every sin in each thought and deed and attitude.
Kindness to the greatest and the least; gentleness that sows the path of peace.
Turn my strivings into works of grace; Breath of God, show Christ in all I do.

Holy Spirit, from creation’s birth, giving life to all that God has made.
Show Your power once again on Earth; cause Your church to hunger for Your ways.
Let the fragrance of our prayers arise; lead us on the road of sacrifice,
that in unity the face of Christ will be clear for all the world to see.

(“Holy Spirit” by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend / “Gabriel’s Oboe” by Ennio Morricone, orch. by Paul Campbell)

Sermon: “Racism and Christianity in America (Part 7: 1863-1865)

*The sermon is available in printed form at www.masonpresbyterian.org, or attached to this email.
An audio recording of the sermon is also available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.*

Hymn: “Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!”

(Printed music and a simple recording of this hymn is available [here](#).)

Rejoice, ye pure in heart! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

With voice as full and strong as ocean’s surging praise,
send forth the sturdy hymns of old, the psalms of ancient days.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Yes, on through life’s long path, still chanting as ye go,
from youth to age, by night and day, in gladness and in woe:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

At last the march shall end; the wearied ones shall rest;
the pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Then on, ye pure in heart! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

(lyrics by Edward Hayes Plumptre, 1865)

Blessing

Jesus says, "Surely I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

The grace of the Lord Jesus

be with all the saints. *(Revelation 22:20-21)*

Amen!



Jacob and Rachel by Palma Vecchio (c. 1520-1525)

(source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palma_il_Vecchio_001.jpg)

Credits

Prayers courtesy of the PC(USA)'s 2018 Book of Common Worship

Scripture passages are from the New Revised Standard Version

Special thanks to Deb for anthem suggestions and Darlene for some hymn suggestions