

Osler Mennonite Church
Sunday Worship Service August 30, 2020
“Guide My Feet”

Song leaders: Kathryn Janzen, Ben Buhler, Michelle McKinnell

Worship Leader: George Janzen Sound: Stephanie Siemens Pianist: Melanie Boldt

Children’s Time: Jake Buhler Ushers: Harold Loewen, Anna Peters

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements

Call to Worship: We gather together in the name of our God, the maker of heaven and earth, who calls us away from the customs and attitudes of the world around us, and invites us instead into a transforming relationship with God and with one another. Let’s worship God together.

Invocation

Hymn: Blue/HWB #582 “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah”

Children’s Gathering Hymn: “Jesus Loves Me”

Children's Time: Jake Buhler

Offering Prayer/Offertory

Sharing Joys and Concerns/Prayer of the Church

School Face Mask Blessing: *God, bless our masks. May they help protect us, our families, teachers, and friends from COVID-19. Grant us peaceful hearts in these strange times. Help us when we feel angry or afraid, and when it seems hard to be brave or kind. Bless these masks and may they be a blessing. Keep those we love safe, healthy, and well.*

Church Face Covering Blessing: O Lord God, you have given us a Law of Love that tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves: Accept our offering of these face coverings which we now dedicate to you for the health, safety, and well-being of your people. Grant that, as we conceal our faces with these coverings, we also reveal your Divine Love to one another; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (From Diana Butler Bass web-site).

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:21-28

From that time on, Jesus began to explain to the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, to suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and religious scholars, and that he must be killed, and on the third day raised to life. 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Rabbi!” he said. “This will never happen to you!” 23 Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get yourself behind me, you Satan! You are trying to make me stumble and fall. You’re setting your mind not on the things of God, but of mortals.” 24 Then Jesus said to the disciples, “If you wish to come after me, you must deny your very selves, take up the instrument

of your own death and begin to follow in my footsteps. 25 “ If you would save your life, you will lose it; but if you would lose your life for my sake, you will find it. 26 What profit would you show if you gained the whole world but lost yourself? What can you offer in exchange for your very self? 27 “ The Promised One will come in the glory of Abba God accompanied by the angels, and will repay all according to their conduct. 28 The truth is, some of you standing here will not taste death before you see the coming of the Promised One’s reign.”

Hymn: Green/SJ #45 “In the morning when I rise”

Epistle Reading: Romans 12:14-21

Bless your persecutors—bless and don’t curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Have the same attitude toward everyone. Don’t be condescending to those who aren’t as well off as you; don’t be conceited. 17 Don’t repay evil with evil. Be concerned with the highest ideal in the eyes of all people. 18 Do all you can to be at peace with everyone. 19 Don’t take revenge; leave room, my friends, for God’s wrath. To quote scripture, “Vengeance is mine, I will pay them back,” says our God.” 20 But there is more: “ If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them drink. For in doing so, you will heap burning coals upon their heads.” 21 Don’t be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by doing good.

Response to the Scripture:

Leader: For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
For the Word of God within us,

People: Thanks be to God!

Hymn: Blue/HWB #420 “Heart with loving heart united”

Sermon: Patty Friesen

How Howard Thurman’s Understanding of Jesus

Shaped the Civil Rights Movement

Matt. 16:21-28, Romans 12:14-21 by Patty Friesen (Aug. 30/20)

African American theologian Howard Thurman’s grandmother, Nancy Ambrose was a slave in Florida. As a girl she remembered a slave preacher telling the slaves that they were not slaves but they were God’s beloved children. Nancy owned that truth and taught it to her children and grandchildren. She influenced her grandson Howard to believe in his inherent

worth as God's child despite the racism he experienced growing up in Florida. He experienced God's love internally when he would spend time alone sitting in the oak tree in his backyard. He had no friends but talked to the oak tree and to God. His time alone with God in nature and his grandmother's teaching of his worth gave him the confidence to become the first African-American to graduate from the eighth grade in Daytona Beach and the first African American to go to a Quaker seminary and the first African American dean of Boston University. (Martin Doblmaier, *Backs Against the Wall*).

Howard continued his quiet contemplative spirituality and incorporated silence into his worship services which other African American preachers didn't like. He formed an inter-racial choir and formed student exchanges between Black and White Women's Colleges. He was invited to come to India for an inter-racial conversation between Black Americans and Indians who were trying to non-violently free themselves from the British Empire. Howard had a profound encounter with Mohatma Ghandi who asks him how he could be a Christian when slave owners and the Klu Klux Klan called themselves Christian. Howard said that Jesus is more closely identified to those who suffer. Ghandi said Black Americans would teach Jesus' way of non-violence to Christianity and the world.

In 1949 Howard Thurman writes *Jesus and the Disinherited*, connecting Jesus' life as a poor Jew in an oppressive Roman Empire to the experience of poor blacks in America. He said Jesus knew their suffering and because Jesus knew their suffering, Jesus valued them as followers and wanted them to walk in his way of non-violence. Thurman said, Jesus didn't want to be worshipped but wanted to be followed and believed. He wanted Black Americans to know their inherent worth as children of God worthy of equal respect, opportunities and voting rights.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is a student of Howard Thurman and together on Sundays they watched Jackie Robinson, the first black player in Major League Baseball. On these Sundays, Thurman stressed to Martin that the non-violence of Jesus must be cultivated in the civil rights movement. Why they marched and how they marched and what they did after the marches was as important as the marches themselves. They must worship God before a march and become grounded in the transcendent experience of God and Christ. He taught that non-violence was a moral and ethical lifestyle as Christians not just a protest tactic. Social issues of injustice were temporary and brief but their relationship with was of utmost importance. As shapers of American religion and justice, they must go deeper into contemplation of God's character and justice.

Central to his ministry, Thurman used the powerful motivating music of the spirituals like O Freedom and I Want Jesus to Walk with Me, and Ain't Nobody Going to Turn Me Round to encourage marchers who went to the front-lines singing in Mississippi and Alabama. While beaten and water hosed, protesters added lyrics like Sheriff Connor Ain't Going to Turn Me Round and Sheriff's Dogs Ain't Going to Turn Me Round.

Howard Thurman didn't march or protest himself and he was criticized for that. He stayed put and prayed and contemplated and the civil rights leaders like John Lewis, Jesse Jackson and Vernon Jordan came to him for teaching and encouragement. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. carried Thurman's book Jesus and the Disinherited in his pocket until his death.

In today's gospel lesson, the call to discipleship is a matter of confession, which means declaring one's faith in Jesus as the Christ, as God's definitive act of revelation and salvation. The Greek word used to mean "confession" also means "martyrdom," in the sense of witness. The giving of one's life is presented as an act of testimony to a truth bigger than oneself. It may

result in literal martyrdom, as in the early church in Rome and in the civil rights movement. It may also mean the daily giving of oneself away in commitment to Christ and his way of non-violence. This call to discipleship is a matter of community. This is not an individualistic ethic of the solitary “I,” but is the ethic of the community of “we” who confess Jesus to be the Christ.

In Romans, Paul assumes that persecution will come to those who remain loyal to Jesus. And the appropriate response to it is blessing, not cursing. Paul stands firmly with Jesus against all other traditions like the Maccabees who went to their deaths calling down curses on their enemies. But in both Jesus’ teaching and practice there was a strikingly new note: Hostility was to be met with prayer, and violence with blessing.

Paul reiterates the basic command: one must not repay evil for evil. Instead, one must take careful thought, prior to any given situation about what will show the watching world that one can hold one’s head up, with nothing to be ashamed of. Do not curse your persecutors (v. 14); do not repay evil for evil (v. 17); now, do not perform acts of vengeance—that is, acts that try to bring justice to bear. God’s people are loved by God and must not take matters into their own hands. The point is then that treating enemies kindly is not only appropriate behaviour in its own right, it may also have the effect of turning their hearts. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good. Yes, there is evil “out there” in the world. But God’s people are to meet it in the way that even Jesus met it: with love and generous goodness and confident non-violence. (New Interpreter’s Commentary).

How does Howard Thurman apply to we white Saskatchewan Mennonites in 2020? We obviously are not in a struggle for racial justice and voting rights but we come alongside those who are. Thurman reminds us that we must be grounded in the goodness of God and meditate on the understanding of Jesus as one who suffers alongside those with their back up against the

wall. Thurman reminds us we are all God's children and challenges us to claim this truth for our own dignity and the dignity of others. May the words of Jesus, Paul and Howard Thurman guide our thoughts and actions in the weeks and months ahead.

Let us pray: Our Gracious God who knows our every sorrow, you are our strength and our song. You show us in Jesus how to be your child in the world. You guide our feet and hold our hand. You stand by us and search our hearts while we run this race. Amen.

Sung Benediction: Blue/HWB #546 "Guide My Feet"

Spoken Benediction: Go in love, for love alone endures. Go in peace, for it is the gift of God. Go in safety, for we cannot go where God is not.

Offering can be e-transferred to osler.mc.treasurer@gmail.com or dropped off in the basket in the foyer.

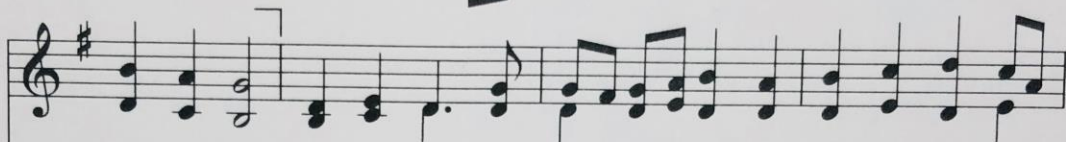
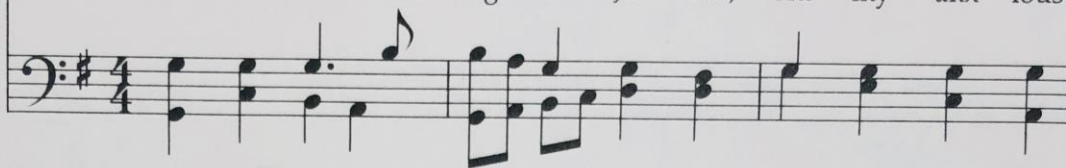
NEXT SUNDAY: Sept 6: Alex Tiessen preaching Worship Leader: Dave Feick
Pianist: Naomi Schellenberg Song Leaders: Michelle McKinnell, Ben Buhler
Children's Time: Kathy Braun Sound: Matthew Stefaniuk
Ushers: John Gascho, Anna Peters

582 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

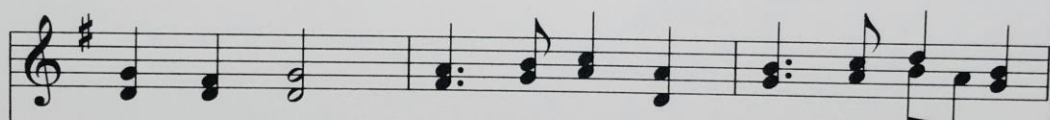
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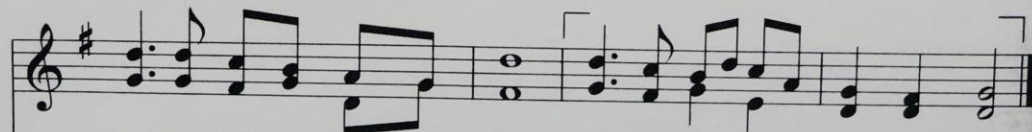
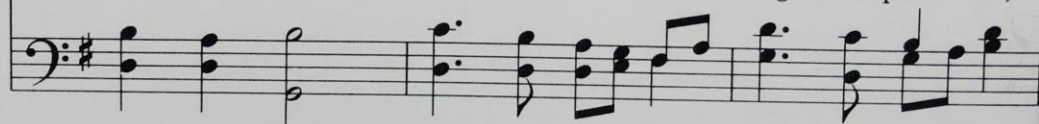
1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim though this
2 O - pen now the cry - stal foun - tain whence the heal - ing
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



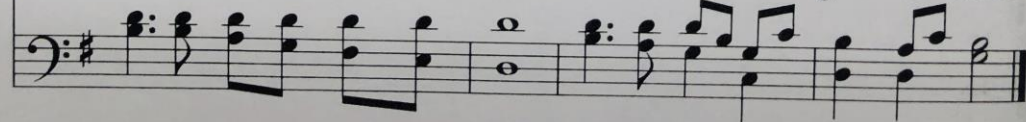
bar - ren land. I am weak, but thou art might - y; hold me with thy
wa - ters flow. Let the fi - ery, cloud - y pil - lar lead me all my
fears sub - side. Death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me safe on



pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, Bread of heav - en,
jour - ney through. Strong De - liv'r - er, strong De - liv'r - er,
Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es,



feed me till I want no more, feed me till I want no more.
be thou still my strength and shield, be thou still my strength and shield.
I will ev - er give to thee, I will ev - er give to thee.



45 In the morning when I rise

GIVE ME JESUS 666. 4 with refrain

1 In the morn-ing when I rise, in the morn-ing when I
 2 Dark — mid-night was my cry, dark — mid-night was my
 3 Just a - bout the break of day, just a - bout the break of
 4 Oh, — when I come to die, oh, — when I come to

rise, in the morn-ing when I rise, give me Je - sus.
 cry, dark — mid-night was my cry, give me Je - sus.
 day, just a - bout the break of day, give me Je - sus.
 die, oh, — when I come to die, give me Je - sus.

Refrain

Give me Je - sus, give me Je - sus. You may

have all this world, give me Je - sus.

Text: Spiritual
 Music: Spiritual; arranged by Wendell Whalum
 Arrangement copyright © 1978 Lawson-Gould Music Publishers, Inc.

SENDING

420 Heart with loving heart united

O DU LIEBE MEINER LIEBE 87. 87D

1 Heart with lov - ing heart u - nit - ed, met to know God's ho - ly will.
2 May we all so love each oth - er and all self - ish claims de - ny,
3 Since, O Lord, you have de - mand - ed that our lives your loveshould show,

Let his love in us ig - nit - ed more and more our spir - its fill.
so that each one for the oth - er will not hes - i - tate to die.
so we wait to be com - mand - ed forth in - to your world to go.

He the head, we are his mem - bers, we re - flect the light he is.
Ev - en so our Lord has loved us, for our lives he gave his life.
Kin - dle in us love's com - pas - sion so that ev - 'ry - one may see

He the mas - ter, we dis - ci - ples, he is ours and we are his.
Still he grieves and still he suf - fers, for our self - ish - ness and strife.
in our fel - low - ship the prom - ise of a new hu - man - i - ty.

Text: Nicolaus L. von Zinzendorf, *Herz und Herz vereint zusammen*, 1723, *Die letzten Reden unseres Herrn*, 1725
Translation copyright © 1983 Walter Klaassen
Music: *Manuscript Chorale Book*, 1735

Guide my feet

546

GUIDE MY FEET Irregular

Leader

All

1,6 Guide my feet while I run this race,
yes, my Lord!

Guide my feet while I run this race,
yes, my Lord!

Guide my feet while I run this race, for I

don't want to run this race in vain!
(race in vain!)

- 2 Hold my hand...
- 3 Stand by me...
- 4 I'm your child...
- 5 Search my heart...