

OSLER MENNONITE CHURCH

Sunday Worship Service

September 27, 2020

Worship Leader: Terry Stefaniuk
Children's Time: Vanessa Stefaniuk
Song Leaders: Kathryn Janzen, Ben Buhler

Pianist: Melanie Boldt
Sound: Matthew Stefaniuk
Ushers: Anna Peters, John Gascho

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements

Call to Worship: "Prayer to Welcome the Sabbath"
Adapted from: Common Prayer

ALL: "Lord of Creation, create in us a new rhythm of life
composed of hours that sustain rather than stress,
of days that deliver rather than destroy,
of time that tickles rather than tackles...
By your ever-restful grace, allow us to enter your Sabbath rest
As your Sabbath rest enters into us."

Invocation:

Leader: "O Lord, let my souls rise up to meet you

People: As the day rises to meet the sun.

Leader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

People: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen."

Source: Common Prayer

Hymn: Blue/HWB #366 "God of Grace and God of Glory"

PRAYING: For the church

God of grace and God of glory 366

CWM RHONDDA 87. 87. 87 extended

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on thy peo - ple
2 Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us scorn thy Christ, as -
3 Cure thy chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour thy pow'r. Crown thine an - cient church's sto - ry, bring her
sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us, free our
thy con - trol. Shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness, rich in
we de - plore. Let the search for thy sal - va - tion be our

bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
lest we miss thy king - dom's goal, lest we miss thy king - dom's goal.
serv - ing thee whom we a - dore, serv - ing thee whom we a - dore.

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1930, *Praise and Service*, 1932

Music: John Hughes, 1905 or 1907, *The Voice of Thanksgiving*, No. 4, 1928

Children's Gathering Hymn: "Jesus Loves Me"
Children's Time: Vanessa Stefaniuk

Offering Prayer: “Paul write in 2 Corinthians 9:7: God loves a cheerful giver. Eugene Peterson in his translation of the Bible says, “God loves it when the giver delights in the giving. Let us pray together: **“God of grace, it is our delight and our devotion to give these gifts to you. All we are and all we have are yours alone.**

Accept this joyful offering as a token of our abiding love: use it to bring peace, justice and comfort to all the world. Amen” *Source: Carol Penney: leading worship*

Offertory

Sharing Joys and Concerns / Prayer of the Church

Hymn: Blue/HWB #20 “Come and see”

GATHERING
20 Come and see

1 “Come and see, come and see, I am the way and the truth,” said he.
2 Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

“Fol - low me, fol - low me, come as a child, O come and see.”
Chris - te, Chris - te, Chris - te e - le - i - son.

II
Chris - te,* Chris - te, a - do - ra - mus te.

I
(melody)
Ky - ri - e,* Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Al - le - lu - ia, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Chris - te, Chris - te, Chris - te e - le - i - son.

*Translation: Christ, we adore you. Alleluia, Lord have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Text: based on John 1, Marilyn Houser Hamm, 1974, *Sing and Rejoice*, 1979
Music: Marilyn Houser Hamm, 1974, *Sing and Rejoice*, 1979
Text and Music copyright ©1974 Marilyn Houser Hamm

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21: 23-32 (Inclusive Bible)

Jesus entered the Temple precincts and began teaching. The chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, “By what authority are you doing what you do? Who gave you this authority?” 24 “And I,” replied Jesus, “will ask you a single question; if you give me the answer, I will tell you my authority for these actions. 25 What was the origin of John’s right to baptize? Was it divine or was it human?” They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘divine,’ he will respond, ‘Then why did you refuse to believe him?’ 26 But if we say ‘human,’ we have the people to fear, for they regard John as a prophet.” 27 So they replied to Jesus, “We don’t know.” Jesus said in reply, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.” 28 Jesus continued, “What do you think? There was a landowner who had two children. The landowner approached the elder and said, ‘My child, go out and work in the vineyard today.’ 29 This first child replied, ‘No, I won’t,’ but afterwards regretted it and went. 30 The landowner then came to the second child and said the same thing. The second child said in reply, ‘I’m on my way,’ but never went. 31 Which of the two did what was wanted?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “The truth is, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. 32 When John came walking on the road of justice, you didn’t believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you didn’t repent and believe.”

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 #151 “Marvelous grace of our loving Lord”

151 Marvelous grace of our loving Lord

MARVELOUS GRACE 99. 99 with refrain

1 Mar-vel-ous grace of our lov - ing Lord, grace that ex - ceeds our
2 Sin and des - pair, like the sea waves cold, threat - en the soul with
3 Mar - vel - ous, in - fi - nite, match - less grace, free - ly be - stowed on

sin and our guilt, yon - der on Cal - va - ry's mount out - poured,
in - fi - nite loss. Grace that is great - er, yes, grace un - told,
all who be - lieve. You that are long - ing to see his face,

Refrain
there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt. Grace, grace,
points to the re - fuge, the might - y cross. Mar - vel - ous grace,
will you this mo - ment his grace re - ceive?

God's grace, grace that will par - don and cleanse with - in. Grace,
in - fi - nite grace, Mar - vel - ous

grace, God's grace, grace that is great - er than all our sin.
grace, in - fi - nite grace,

Sermon: "Better Late than Never"

Patty Friesen

God is the God of Latecomers, Late-Bloomers and Mind Changers. In today's parable of the two sons, the first son said he was not going to work in the vineyard and later changed his mind and the one who said he was going and didn't show up. Jesus condemns the religious leaders who challenged his authority by saying prostitutes and tax collectors will end up in the kingdom of God before them because they showed up - even though it was late. They, the outcasts of society changed their minds about Jesus while the religious leaders never did.

Jesus is turning religion and a proper work ethic on upside down. This is offensive to religious leaders, and to all of us obedient ones who have obeyed all the laws about not being late: early to bed, early to rise; the early bird gets the worm and all the proverbs against laziness. Here Jesus is upholding an irresponsible, lazy, disobedient son who probably doesn't even know how to work in a vineyard. Jesus is upsetting the balance of obedience and responsibility. What other bible stories do we have about those who refused their responsibility? Jonah ran away from God's call. He later went to Ninevah but only after a major conversion experience in the belly of the whale. In the parable of the Prodigal Son - the disobedient son who fritters away his inheritance and then comes crawling back to for forgiveness after his conversion experience in the pig pen. What is with these latecomers, late bloomers and mind-changers and why does God have so much patience with them?

What made the first son change his mind to go work in the vineyard? Did he have nothing better to do? Did his conscience get the better of him? Was he typically rebellious and late and resentful? We suspect so. What if we took out the moral judgements around work ethic out of the equation and what if he was just a late-bloomer - not only of conscience but of thought

and commitment? We all know people like that and we might even find ourselves in the first son.

Parables and folk tales around the world all contain such characters of late-comers and late-bloomers as re-told by Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes in *The Myths of the Late-Bloomer*. The Late-Bloomer is the one called to a mission but doddles irresponsibly along the path through the forest, or who gets lost or has other adventures not related to the original mission. While we the listeners may despair of the late-bloomer ever reaching their destination, or ever fulfilling their potential or obligation or purpose - the late bloomer actually gains wisdom and problem solving skills and endurance along the long way and finally arrive to the mission fully equipped to do the job well. And all readers and parents sigh with relief.

In these international folk tales, there is not judgement of the lateness or the lostness or the doddling but an honouring of the time it takes for the maturation of the late bloomer. She may not be the first on the scene but when she arrives, she brings greater depth and commitment to the project. He may not be the first responder in a crisis but is the patient physiotherapist for the long road for healing. Folk tales suggest we need late-bloomers - that we have gifts that are worth waiting for. While the path for late-bloomers feel circuitous rather than straight, we gain the life experiences and wisdom along the way that fill out a rich life.

Our western culture is not sympathetic or supportive of late-bloomers; and mind changers; by high school graduation you are supposed to have figured out your whole life on a straight successful career path so that by the time you reach 30 you own a house and are happily married with children. The path is not that straight for most of us. Many brilliant actors and artists particularly came into their own in the second half of their lives. Julia Child was 50 when she got her famous cooking show. Vincent Van Gogh didn't start painting until he was 42.

Abraham and Sarah were senior citizens when they left for Canaan. Jesus didn't really get going until his mid-30's which in first-century Palestine was considered middle-age.

I was taught growing up that God had a plan for each of us but I was never quite sure what that was. I was the last kid on our block to learn how to ride my bike. I didn't get my driver's license until I was 17. I didn't finish school or get married until my 30s and didn't own a home until I was 40 and at 55 I'm finally learning how to play the accordion. I had no clue where I was headed in life but I went with whatever was put in front of me which led to a winding path to Canadian Mennonite University, Voluntary Service in Oregon, seminary in Indiana, pastoring in Minnesota, moving to Saskatchewan. Being a late-bloomer was certainly nerve-racking for me and for my parents who didn't know what I was doing from year to year. They were relieved when I finally married Patrick - they thought that would help. It has but I still change three jobs for his every one job:)

What I do know is that God loves late-bloomers, late-comers and mind-changers. God is a God of openness and opportunities and options as opposed to a traffic cop who points us in a particular direction with dire consequences if we don't go there. Theologian Walter Wink tells the story of an agonizing life decision he had to make and he prayed and prayed about which path to take and finally he felt he heard God sigh and say - "I can work with either option!"

God is way more flexible and patient than we humans are and is a Flow that runs deeper and gentler than we can know or imagine. As Nora pointed out in the parable of the latecomers to the vineyard last week who got the same wage as those who started working at the crack of dawn - God is the God of enough of whatever we need. We have no need to worry about God's generosity and what appears to be God's injustice over grace given to latecomers and late-bloomers and mind-changers; prodigals and tax-collectors and doddlers.

May God bless us all through this word: Gracious God, you are wider in mercy and deeper in grace that we can even imagine. Thank you for your patience with all of us who bloom late and show up late and change our minds. Lead us in the reality of this truth this week as we seek to know you and love you more deeply. Amen.

Sung Benediction: Purple/SS #121 “Nothing is lost on the breath of God”

Watch for God Among Us

121 Nothing is lost on the breath of God

GREEN LANE Irregular

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are arranged in three columns, corresponding to the three systems of music.

System 1: Chords: A, E, F#m, A/C#

1 Noth - ing is lost on the breath of God,
 2 Noth - ing is lost to the eyes of God,
 3 Noth - ing is lost to the heart of God,

System 2: Chords: D, Bm/D, Esus, E

noth - ing is lost for ev - er;
 noth - ing is lost for ev - er.
 noth - ing is lost for ev - er;

System 3: Chords: A, E, F#m, A/C#

God's breath is love, and that love will re - main,
 God sees with love, and that love will re - main,
 God's heart is love, and that love will re - main,

System 4: Chords: D, Bm/D, Esus, E

hold - ing the world for ev - er. No
 hold - ing the world for ev - er. No
 hold - ing the world for ev - er. No

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 Music: Colin Gibson
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Watch for God Among Us

A E/G# D/F# A/E

feath - er too light, no hair — too fine, no
 jour - ney too far, no dis - tance too great, no
 im - pulse of love, no of - fice of care, no

B7/D# B7 A/E E

flow - er too brief in its glo - ry, no —
 val - ley of dark - ness too blind - ing; no —
 mo - ment of life in its full - ness; no be -

A E/G# D/F# A/E

drop in the o - cean, no dust in the air, but is
 crea - ture too hum - ble, no child — too small for —
 gin - ning too late, — no end - ing too soon, but is

B7/D# B7 E A

count - ed and told in God's sto - ry.
 God to be seek - ing and find - ing.
 gath - ered and known in its good - ness.

Spoken Benediction: “May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you where he may send you: may he guide you through the wilderness: protect you through the storm; may he bring you home rejoicing: at the wonder he has shown you; may he bring you home rejoicing: once again into our doors.”

Source: Common Prayer