

## FPC Interactive Worship Bulletin for September 25th, 2022

### **GATHERING**

#### **Prelude**

#### **Welcome**

Welcome to worship with FPC! We are glad you are here this morning.

If you are new here, we invite you to fill out a welcome card or email [secretary@fpcmissoula.org](mailto:secretary@fpcmissoula.org) with your information so we can get connected with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it!  
Let us prepare our hearts and minds to worship and encounter our living God.

#### **Call to Worship**

One: We gather for worship trusting that God is with us,

**All: knowing that there is nothing that separates us from the presence of our Lord.**

One: Come into God's presence, for God is among us now.

**All: For the God who breathes new life into the dust meets us in this place.**

One: We enter into worship with hope,  
knowing that God stands eager to meet us and enfold us in His love.  
Let us worship God together!

#### **Gathering Song: All Creatures of Our God and King**

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing: alleluia, alleluia!  
Thou burning sun with golden beam, Thou silver moon with softer gleam,  
O praise Him, O praise Him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong, ye clouds that sail in heav'n along: O praise Him, alleluia!  
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice, ye lights of evening, find a voice!  
O praise Him, O praise Him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship Him in humbleness: O praise Him, alleluia!  
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in One!  
O praise Him, O praise Him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

William Henry Draper and Ralph Vaughan Williams\*\*\*

### **PRAISING**

#### **Prayer of Adoration**

Let us pray.

Loving God, be among us now. Show us your ways & guide our steps.

Live in us, that we may be people of steadfast hope and powerful giving.

Help us hear your words, challenging us to give you all the things that are yours.

Holy One among us, help us be a holy people who receive your word with joy  
and live your message with love.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **The Lord is One**

When I wake up, Lord, be on my lips. As I lay down, be my unconsciousness.

Let the Spirit of the Lord increase in me as I breathe.

When my heart sings songs of joy, when my heart grieves and can't take it anymore,

Let the Spirit of the Lord bind me and set me free.

*Refrain: The Lord is One, Father, Spirit, Son;*

*From the garden to the tree, from resurrection to redeemed,*

*The Lord is One; to Him we come empty handed to receive the promises He keeps.*

Let your words be written on our bones. May we seek out those who are alone.

Let the Spirit of the Lord course like a river through us.

Let the Spirit of the Lord course like a river through us! *Refrain*

Cleanse my mind as I listen to You. Cleanse my heart as You speak truth.

Cleanse our minds as we listen to You. Cleanse our hearts as You speak truth.

Let the Spirit of the Lord sanctify us today! *Refrain*

Written by Morgan Cunningham

## BELONGING

### Kids on the Steps

#### Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Forgiveness

As God's children, we are invited to come to our God with the fullness of our lives, to admit our love and our hate, to admit our faith and our fear. Trusting in God's mercy, let us make our confession.

Lord, we admit that we do not always remember that you are with us.  
We lose hope in your presence, we lose our grip on faith.  
Our fear stifles us, our doubt plagues us.  
Have mercy on us.

We ask that you would help us to become more aware of your presence,  
That you would help us to lean on you, and trust the love that surrounds us.  
Help us to be your people at all times – when we are joyful, when we are suffering,  
That your love and faithfulness may radiate from us wherever we go.

This we pray in the name of Jesus, who is with us always. Amen.

Friends, hear this Good News: the love of God is beyond measure,  
and you are included in that love.

One: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## FORMING

#### Sermon: Selected Verses from Genesis 37, 39-50

Good morning! I want you guys to prepare yourselves this morning, because you're going to be hearing pretty much nothing but stories. Now, I think stories are one of the best ways to teach, and we see Jesus used this in his ministry by telling stories often to communicate points in parables. That said, I'm not Jesus. But I'll do my best anyways. So, onto the story.

So last week, we heard the story of Abraham, and the amazing promises he received, and how he took this leap of faith to leave his country, and his homeland, not knowing where he was going simply because God told him to. Today, I have a little bit of a different story - less about a leap of faith, and more about consistent faithfulness.

I've told y'all quite a few of my hitchhiking stories from when I lived in Mississippi, and I love to tell them because God's grace was so abundant during that time. See, when we went hitchhiking, I called it the "practical exam" for the program I did down there, where we had spent a year learning all about God and His promises, and we would then spend this period of hitchhiking, backpacking, and rock climbing learning how to practice trusting God at His word, knowing that He would be faithful to us as we were faithful to Him. So we're on our way from Jackson, MS to Roswell, NM and we're in East Texas, I think just West of Shreveport, LA. Anyway, it's me, my buddy Nick, and our friend Chloe, and we get picked up around 8:00AM by this guy named Alan driving a Chrysler 300.

Now, when Alan had picked us up, he had just got done working a 12 hour overnight shift as the foreman in this particular oil field he was working in. And Alan, he goes on to tell us all about God had done in his life, and how he had no choice other than to pick us up *because* of everything God had done. Now, this is my favorite form of evangelism, telling people what God has done for you, because it inspires hope and believing that God might do the same for somebody else. He wasn't trying to convince us of anything, he was just so excited to share what was good because it was good. So here's what we learned about Alan:

Alan was a convicted felon. He did time in prison for something he was rightfully convicted of, and while he was serving his time, he found Jesus in prison. He came to know the Lord, and actively started turning his life around. In fact, he was so blessed by what he found, that he went to Calvary so that he could work to serve and minister to other folks in prison. During this time, while serving God and other convicted felons, Alan started looking for work, and trusted God with the hunt for a job. He ended up landing a job working in this particular oil field that, as a rule, doesn't hire felons. Now, Alan is in charge of that particular oil field because of his consistent faithfulness both to his work, and to God. Alan also found himself a sweetheart, to whom he's married and has a beautiful daughter with. They also happen to own a home in a beautiful gated community that, as a rule, doesn't hire felons.

Alan also went above and beyond to serve us, and it made sense to see the fruit God had bore in Alan's life in his faithful endeavors: he took us to his home, and made us breakfast, and proceeded to drive us three hours out of his way *after* his 12 hour over-night shift. He also gave us \$100, and found us our next ride before leaving us. Alan had been consistently, persistently faithful in his endeavors, in serving others and blessing God, and God blessed him for it.

Today's scripture isn't dissimilar from Alan's story. Today, we're telling the story of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Jacob, or Israel, who was the son of Isaac, who was the son of Abraham - so this is Abraham's great-grandson. Now, I can tell you what I honestly considered doing - I thought about just reading the story of Joseph from up here to you this morning, and that would have been the sermon. And frankly, that would have worked, and been great, and definitely taken over half an hour. The story of Joseph goes from Genesis chapters 37-50, and it is its own lesson and teaching that I so highly recommend you all read later. For now though, I'll be giving a summary with a few focus points that I'll read from the Bible.

*\*Genesis 37, 39-50, select passages\**

There are a few focus points to this story: one, is that Joseph is continually faced with hardship. Injustice. Consistently, he's on the ropes. But there's a second, larger focus point to this story, and that's the phrase we hear so often throughout, which is that God was *with* Joseph. With Joseph in his slavery, with Joseph in prison, with Joseph when he went to Pharaoh. All the way through, in every piece of hardship and every trial, God is there with Joseph. Now, I like to try and find consistent themes in the Bible. Sometimes this can be a little difficult when reconciling the Old Testament and the New Testament, because we see that God's relationship with man changes somewhat over the course of the Old Testament and New Testament. But when we look at God's relationship with Joseph, and our relationship with God, I think we find some pretty consistent things about God's character. First of all, it's nothing new to us to know that we're going to face hardship. As a matter of fact, when we look in the New Testament and what Jesus teaches his disciples, we see one of the few things that Christ actually guarantees us is that we are going to face challenges, persecution, and hardship. It doesn't necessarily say why, it doesn't say whether we're going to be facing hardship as the due payment for our actions, all it says is that we will face hardship. But there's also a guarantee that comes in the midst of that, and it's a guarantee that was lived out in the life of Joseph, and it's a guarantee that Jesus gives us, which is that regardless what we might be slaves to, regardless what prisons we might be in, that God is going to be there with us. Our trial is not just taking a large leap of faith, but instead is living out steadfast faithfulness to God even in the most challenging situations and circumstances. But we get to know that regardless, God will always be faithful to us. That every time that we find ourselves in the fire we know God is standing there with us. We know that every time we find ourselves in deep water, that God is the one who holds back the seas. Jesus promised that he would give us a peace that surpasses all understanding, that he would give us peace that the world simply couldn't comprehend, and that piece would look like knowing that we would find ourselves in prison, and that God would give us the courage and the strength to sing anyways.

Now before I go any further, there's one key phrase that's used in the story of Joseph. As a matter fact, when people are talking about the story of Joseph I think this is the number one phrase that gets brought up. It's at the very end of the story, in chapter 50, we're Joseph's brothers are afraid that Joseph will seek vengeance. And Joseph says this to his brothers, he says, "what you intended for evil, God has intended for good." Now fundamentally there are two ways that we can look at this particular statement of Joseph. The first way, is that we can say that God has designed all of these evil things to happen for the sake of some unforeseeable profit. What we see in that sense is a God who is manipulative, who is controlling, who designs pain in exchange for some good that we may never know. I think that God not only is seen as sadistic, but also is a description of God that is incompatible with the rest of the Bible. I think that view of God does not fit with what we learn about God from the rest of scripture. Which brings me to the other view of this statement from Joseph. And this is the view that I think it's compatible with the rest of the Bible and what it tells us about God. What we see in the world is that mankind is cruel and fickle and wicked. Yes, sometimes mankind just misses the mark, but sometimes mankind is cruel. And what we see in this other view is that despite mankind's cruelty towards our fellow brothers and sisters, is that God will always find a way to redeem even the most desperate of circumstances. Instead of trampling on our free will, instead of usurping our ability to choose, god says, "I will be with you in those choices and circumstances." He says, "I will take what is broken, and restore it to beauty." This does not mean that God creates brokenness for the sake of redeeming things. This means that even though sometimes things break that God will be with you when they are broken and see them through to beauty once more. That is the god that we see in the rest of the Bible, and that we see in the story of Joseph. The Bible tells us where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom, and so it would not make sense for God to desire Joseph to be in prison. What does make sense however, is that we have a God who can do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even imagine, and that means elevating a man from being cast into prison who had no business being there, to the station to rule over the most powerful country in the world and to save God's chosen people by doing so. What we have is a God who redeemed Alan, and granted him the desires of his heart because God is faithful to His children. We have a God who not only keeps his outlandish promises, but who also is faithful in the slow, persistent type of way. What you don't see in this story is that when Joseph was sold into slavery, he was 17. He met his brothers again for the first time when he was 37 years old. Twenty years had gone by. 20 years of slow, painstaking faithfulness and persistence and loving God and God loving Joseph.

So here's the question: what are you a slave to? What prison are you in? For some of us, maybe it's literally prison, but for others, maybe it's something harder to see than four walls. Maybe it's fear. Maybe it's money. Maybe it's alcohol, or pornography, or work, or food, or your health, or something so small or overwhelmingly large that's keeping you captive that you don't even want to engage with it. But the one most important thing that I can tell you today is that whatever is keeping you captive is smaller than God. However hard to face this challenge may be, whatever it is that plagues you, God will be faithful anyways.

I cannot guarantee that you will not find yourself in another prison. I cannot guarantee you that every other bad thing will be deflected away from you. But what I can guarantee you, is that no matter what hardship you find yourself in, that God will be with you there in the midst of it. The fact is, God has always been faithful to us. Our challenge is in turn to be faithful to Him - not to curse His name in the face of poverty, or diabetes, or injustice, or addiction, but to approach Him and embrace Him, because even while we're hurting, God is right there with us in the hurt, seeing us through to the end. He has always been faithful.

Let's pray.

### **Song of Response: He's Always Been Faithful**

Morning by morning, I wake up to find the power and comfort of God's hand in mine.  
Season by season I watch Him amazed, in awe of the mystery of His perfect ways.  
All I have need of, His hand will provide. He's always been faithful to me.

I can't remember a trial or a pain He did not recycle to bring me gain.  
I can't remember one single regret in serving God only and trusting His hand.  
All I have need of His hand will provide. He's always been faithful to me.

This is my anthem, and this is my song, the theme of the stories I've heard so long.  
God has been faithful, He will be again. His love and compassion, it knows no end.  
All I have need of His hand will provide. He's always been faithful to me.

Sara Groves\*\*

## STEWARDING

### **Invitation to Offering**

The invitation to make our offering to Christ, is really a call to a holy and exalted vocation. To humility. Compassion. Service. Self-giving.

What will you give of your life to the service of the true King? How will you enter into your calling to love your neighbor, today?

### **Musical Offering: My Shepherd Will Supply My Need**

Isaac Watts\*\*\*

### **Prayers of the People**

**Refrain 1: You hear us calling, You hear us calling: Abba, Father.**

**You hear us calling, You hear us calling: Abba, Father.**

**Refrain 2: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.**

John Arndt, David Gungor, Ian Cron, Ben Kilgore, Evan Wickham\*\*

## SENDING

### **Sending Song: Cornerstone**

My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly trust in Jesus' Name.

*Refrain: Christ alone. Cornerstone. Weak made strong in the Savior's love.*

*Through the storm, He is Lord. Lord of all.*

When darkness seems to hide His face, I rest on His unchanging grace.

In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

My anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain*

When He shall come with trumpet sound, oh may I then in Him be found.

Dressed in His righteousness alone. Faultless stand before the throne. *Refrain*

Jonas Myrin, Reuben Morgan, Eric Liljero, Edward Mote, William Batchelder Bradbury\*\*

### **Benediction**

Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even imagine, to the God who is faithful to us in all things, always, who can save to the uttermost to the ends of the earth... to Him be honor, and glory, and power in the church, and in Christ Jesus, and may He guide your steps from these doors in all that you do. Amen.

### **Prayer List**

**Ongoing Prayer Support:** Victor Schlimgen, Eva Tsosie and son Chaske,  
Jason Kirchner, Tom Tucker, Sheryl Tegelberg, Mary Barnett

**Prayers for Health and Healing:** Karma Fussell, Kelly Nicholson,  
Jim Kieronski, Lou Power

**Condolences:** the family of Esther Heyer, the family of Steve Arno, the family of Lillian LaCroix,  
Penny McGill, Jennifer Chabotte, and Hailey Chabotte, in the loss of Penny's sister Dolores,  
the family and friends of Charlotte Rice, the family and friends of Jean Rheinshmidt,  
the family and friends of Marie Rising

#### Leading in Worship This Morning:

Liturgist: Meg Limberger

Kids on the Steps: Don Harbaugh

Sermon: Austin Graef

Musicians: Austin Graef, Emma Thackston,  
Joselyn Thomsen, Morgan Cunningham, Noah Hill

Sound and Video Techs: Gary Jones,

Diane Wells-Cherry and Carl Miller

#### EPC Ministry Staff:

Pastor: Dan Cravy

Worship Director: Emma Thackston

Children, Youth and Family Director: Austin Graef

Church Operations Manager: Becky Kress

Program Support Administrator: Jo Ruby

Church Secretary: Haleigh Adair

Facilities Steward: Gary Jones

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