

Sunday
February 3, 2019
10:30 a.m.

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Pastor Greg

Becoming disciples,
serving God's world.



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Plain print indicates worship leader.
Bold print indicates the people.
*Indicates please stand as able.

Look

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements, Ministry Opportunities

Opening to the Creative Spirit

Choir: In the world of the driven

Let us be drawn in

Let your love be a given

Let us be drawn in

To imagine, to dream, to create, to redeem

For the sake of the livin'

Let us be drawn in...

Leader: God's act of creating all that is, God's act of entering our lives in the person of Jesus, God's everyday act of creating new life – all these are acts of bringing that which is not, into being — all acts of originality. To create is to assert ourselves in a way that is risky, that invites stepping into the unknown. Jesus told a story about people who did different things with the "talents" given to them. The one who took a risk and utilized those talents multiplied his gift in the world. What can you do to risk what God has given you to expand love and grace in the world?

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*Leader: Let us stand and pray together:

Risking God, You created something from nothing. Open us to move into the unknown future with confidence so

that we might live into Your vision for this world You continue to create. Draw us into Your possibilities. Give us the courage to act. Amen.

***Opening Song of Praise:** #2130 The Summons

***Connecting**

What holds us back from the courage to make a move? A writer named Robert Gruden said, "Creativity is dangerous. Its pleasure is not the comfort of the safe harbor, but the thrill of the reaching sail." Sometimes what holds us back is that we are comfortable, even if not happy. We simply get used to the way things are.

Hear the Good News! The Lord has created an ever-expanding universe, and you are part of it. You can expand your world and the world around you by seeing yourself as God sees you – able to do far more than you can imagine. If you are uncomfortable, it just means you are growing. As our greeting and passing of the peace today, I invite you to turn to your neighbors and greet them with this, "Go for it because God is with you!" And if there is a "high-five" involved, so be it!

Listen

Hymn: #2233 Where Children Belong

Make Belief Moment ~ *Beth Griner*

We "make our belief" that God is playing and creating through people in all places, and God plays and creates with us too!

Children 3 yrs. to 3rd grade will be dismissed to POP! with Julie Griffin

The Word in Music: Meditation on "Beautiful Savior" ~ *Handbell Choir*

***The Word Read Aloud:** Matthew 25:24-30

The Word Proclaimed: "Serious Business" ~ *Pastor Greg*

Respond

Prayer Song: #399 Take My Life, and Let It Be

Ushers will collect prayer requests

Praying for the World, and The Lord's Prayer

Offering Back to God

Offertory: Come, We That Love the Lord ~ *Handbell Choir*

***Doxology:** #95 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

One of the most creative things Jesus did in His ministry was to draw people into fellowship around a meal. His actions were "out of the box" in terms of who He dined with. Perhaps He sensed that when the food and drink is filling our bodies, people's guard comes down just a little bit, and they see their common humanity in their common hungry stomachs. Perhaps it is a good model for us to think about how church could sometimes get out of the box we put it in.

So we come to the table to be reminded of this radical, hospitable, creative Jesus that we follow.

And we follow His example—welcoming all who are hungry for love, for fellowship, for connection, for inspiration, for new life. All who repent of their sins and desire to live in peace with God, others, and themselves are invited.

The Great Thanksgiving

God be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your spirits in celebration of God's love!

We lift them up to God!

Let us give thanks and praise!

We put ourselves ALL IN!

God set in motion the grandest creativity project of all – light where there was no light, waters and land, creatures on foot and wing, beauty and laughter. And the Lord called it good.

Out of that goodness we came. Imbued with the gifts of the Creator, we were invited to begin our lives of creating: making, building, planting, crafting, fashioning.

Sometimes we got sidetracked and forgot this true calling. We destroyed instead of built up. But

You, God, kept repairing our lives, calling us again into the joy of relationship with You.

And so we proclaim our praise with the saints of all time and place, repeating after me:

Holy Holy Creating God!

Holy Holy Creating God!

Everywhere we see Your glory!

Everywhere we see Your glory!

Blessed are they who are drawn in.

Blessed are they who are drawn in.

Singing the heart song of love!

Singing the heart song of love!

Your creativity knows no bounds, and in the fullness of time You came to us in flesh and blood. In sending Jesus You created human and holy connection and showed us what love looks like in public: preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming release to the captives, recovering sight to the blind, setting at liberty those who are oppressed. Jesus promised to continue this work through a new covenant of creativity – sending the Holy Spirit to remain and move in and through us.

On the night in which He gave Himself up for us, He took bread, gave thanks to You, broke the bread, gave it to His disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, He took the cup, gave thanks to You, gave it to His disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, as His disciples, what shall WE do? Please repeat after me:

We will break ourselves open.

We will break ourselves open.

We will pour ourselves out.

We will pour ourselves out.

In food for the hungry...

In food for the hungry...

And love for the stranger.

And love for the stranger.

Just as Christ offered all...

Just as Christ offered all...

So too shall we...

So too shall we...

We will rise to new life...

We will rise to new life

And commit to create...

And commit to create...

Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, right here, right now, so that we might know Your presence and power in our lives. Make us one with Christ so that we can co-create Your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Let this bread and fruit of the vine fill us with Your Holy Spirit for the work and play of loving creation and each other fully. Let the people repeat:

Amen!

Amen!

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

So be it!
So be it!
Yes!
Yes!

Prayer after Receiving

Holy Hospitable God, we give You thanks for what You have created in this moment of our sharing: more connection to You in answering Jesus' invitation to the table, more connection to each other as we shared in the common elements, and more connection to the world as we made our vows to share this abundant grace in the world.

Amen.

***Song:** #658 This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made

***Song:** #92 For the Beauty of the Earth

***Closing Song of Life:** #3109 Living Spirit, Holy Fire (verses 1-4)

*Benediction

May you see the unfolding of each day as an opportunity to be a co-creator with God. As a follower of Jesus, may you feel His company leading you toward creating more kindness, justice and mercy. May you know the nudge of the creative Spirit within, "making belief" in all you are and do. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

*Postlude

Prayer for Family and Friends

Updates and New Requests This Week

Wayne Lash (Lori's 3-yr-old great-grandson) is home from Helen DeVos after a week. His count is doing better.

Previous Requests

Jack and Cynda Buckallew

Carol Eaton

Pray for Don and Cathy Eichholz (Larry and Sally Kohler's friends). Cathy has breast cancer and is recovering from surgery.

Lauren Frantz has been having irregular heart beats, low oxygen, and low temps. They are in the process of getting in to see a specialist.

The family of Jeff and Cathy Johnson are making critical care decisions for their mother.

Jonathan (Den and Marlene Sherman's grandson) had a reaction to a new medicine.

Paul Moberly (Susan Moberly-Hayes's father) is in Bronson Hospital with pneumonia.

Walker Polsinelli is in Kuwait.

Diana Pomeroy and family are mourning the loss of her uncle, Don Linders.

Avery Schutter (Paul and Marilyn's infant great-granddaughter) is holding her own but is facing a lengthy recovery.

Karen Simpson is recovering at home following surgery.

Arden Sult is recovering from knee replacement.

Grant Swinehart is recovering at home following surgery.

VUMC's Mission Statement



The General Rule of Discipleship

To witness to Jesus Christ in the world, and to follow his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

For Cheer and Hello

David Bretz
Barb Griner
Pat McClelland
Beverly Nimmo

Robert & Carmen Parsons
Marv & Kitty Starbuck
Mina Willett

This Week's Celebrations

Birthdays

2/3 Anessa Read
2/7 Laurie Nic

2/8 Hayden Hayes
2/9 Noni Heikes

In Service to Our Country

Matthew Kohler
Ryan Miller
Walker Polsinelli

Tyler Smith
Geoff White



Kalamazoo Gospel Mission needs bread

We are continuing to collect bread for The Kalamazoo Gospel Mission.

If you would like to contribute, please bring loaves of sliced white bread to the church, and they will be delivered to KGM.

24-Hour prayer vigil

We would like to have prayer for our church, our church family, and others for 24 hours a day, if possible. If you would like to sign up for an hour (as many as you would like), please write your name in available spaces on the chart near the welcome center.

Coming deadlines

- ScripCents orders are due in the church office by 2:00 Friday, Feb. 15.

Help is needed at the Welcome Center

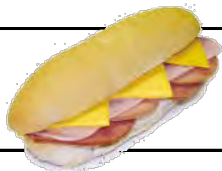
Monthly Welcome Center “welcomers” are needed. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.



Children ages 3 yrs. to third grade leave the worship service right after the kids' message and return to the service after the offering.

Please be sure your child has a name tag with age or grade and your cell phone number.

Remember to pick up your sub orders after worship this morning.



This Week's Calendar

Today

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for everyone
10:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
after Worship Pick up sub orders

Monday, February 4

6:00 p.m. Finance Committee in the Library
6:30 p.m. Family volleyball in the FLC
6:30 p.m. Scout Troop meeting, Taylor Room
7:00 p.m. Worship Committee in the Library
8:00 p.m. SPRC in the Library

Tuesday, February 5

2:00 p.m. Sew What Now God, Taylor Room
6:30 p.m. RAW (high school youth) in Rm 107
6:30 p.m. Scout Den meeting in the FLC
7:00 p.m. Trustees in the Library

Wednesday, February 6

10:30 a.m. Wednesday Winners, Taylor Room
2:45 p.m. SHED (mid. school outreach), Rm 107
5:00 p.m. HELIX (middle school youth), Rm 107
6:00 p.m. Handbell Choir practice, Sanctuary
6:30 p.m. Pickleball in the FLC
7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the Sanctuary

Thursday, February 7

10:00 a.m. Play Gym in the FLC
6:00 p.m. Play Gym in the FLC
7:00 p.m. Apprentice class, Room 125

Friday, February 8 - Pastor's Day Off

no activities are scheduled

Saturday, February 9

9:00 a.m. Pickleball in the FLC

Monday through Friday

9:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. Heart & Hands Preschool

Next Week

Thursday, February 14

6:30 p.m. Scouts Distr. Round Table, Taylor Rm

Saturday, February 16

8:30 a.m. Loaves & Fishes in the FLC till 9:30a

January 27 attendance:

Worship 98

Sunday School 35

Weekly Donations

Needed each week

General Fund:

\$ 5,288.50

Building Fund:

\$ 1,140.66

Received Jan 20-26

General Fund:

\$ 2,230.20

Building Fund:

\$ 759.00

please see more on the other side

Coffee hour

Coffee hour helpers are needed: set up on Saturday; clean up after church. Call Vera Walker, 532-3551, if you have questions.

Book 2 of the Apprentice Bible Study Starting (or Re-starting) in February

Wow! What a wonderful experience has been the first 12 weeks in this series based on James Bryan Smith's The Good and Beautiful God. Starting Thursday, Feb. 7, we will delve into his second book, The Good and Beautiful Life.

"The problem is, he tells us, we have bought into false notions of happiness and success. These self-centered decisions lead us further into the vices that cause ruin: anger, lust, lying, worry and judging. Eventually we find ourselves living a beautifully packaged life of self-destruction.

"Following the Sermon on the Mount, this follow-up to The Good and Beautiful God guides us to look behind these character flaws and to replace our false beliefs with Jesus' narratives about life in the kingdom of God."

Won't you join us Thursday evenings at 7:00 for this spirit lifting series. Let me or the office know of your interest as soon as you can so we can order enough books (John Cleveland 269-649-1405, Jcleveland327@gmail.com; church office 269-649-2343, reception@vicksburgumc.org). The cost is approx. \$20 – but don't let that stop you from signing up. God will find a way! Also, I am told, you may be able to find a less expensive copy at Amazon, etc.

The Opioid Dilemma

Sunday, March 10 at 12:30

Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Potluck lunch at noon followed by Guest Speaker

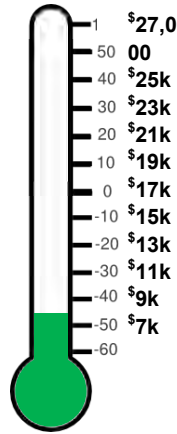
Join us to hear Dr. Bruce Springer from Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Service speak about:

- The opioid crisis
- The impact on families and communities
- Available treatment & services



Bring a dish to pass!

Invite a friend to church for fellowship, food, and learning!



Where We Stand

As of January 25, we have received \$7,895 toward our share of the grant we are seeking for cement board exterior renovation.

Flowers for the church altar

We need flowers for Sundays. There is a sign up sheet for this. If you need help, contact Dee Morton about ordering flowers from Heirloom Rose in Schoolcraft for \$25.

Do you have ideas? Let us know.

Fill out the information below and place in the offering plate or in Polly's box in the work room.

One thing that I think we should be doing that we don't—something that would really help our church grow and reach those that need it, is

One thing we have always done as a Church that I really don't understand and think should be discontinued is

please see more on the other side