

Sunday
October 25, 2020
9:30 a.m.

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

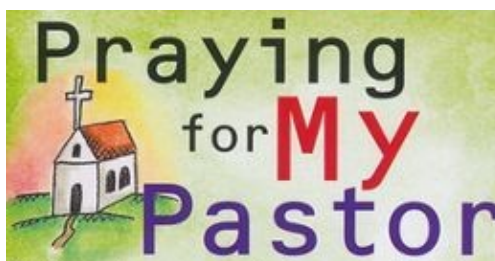
Pastor Greg

Becoming disciples,
serving God's world.



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Plain print indicates the worship leader.

Bold print indicates the people.

*Indicates please stand as able.

Gathering

Video: "We Bow Before the One"

Saint Paul's Prayer from Ephesians 3.14-21 rendered by Chris Neufeld-Erdman.

We bow before the One, from whom the whole creation flows,
in whom the whole cosmos grows toward the fullness of Love
divine.

From riches inexhaustible, may strength rise in us, the Christ-
light fill us, illuminating us in Love sublime.

And may grace unite us with all who sing Love's song until we
know how high and wide and deep and long is this Love
supreme.

All Abundance now is ours: we, filled up by this Three-Person'd
Love — within, beneath, beside, above, more than all our
wildest dreams.

Glorious is God among us. Glorious is Christ within us. Glory
from Beginning to End,
Now and forever. Amen.

Call to Worship

Let us prepare our hearts as we await the coming of our Lord.

Let us watch for the One who heard our cries and shouldered
the suffering of our world. Let us anticipate the coming of
Christ's eternal world with wholeness, reconciliation and
plenty for all. Let us wait in expectation for the day when
God's glory is revealed in all its fullness.

Opening Prayer: Psalm 71 (NRSV)

A Prayer for Life-long Protection and Help

¹ In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame.

² In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline
your ear to me and save me. ³ Be to me a rock of refuge, a
strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my
fortress. ⁴ Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the
wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel. ⁵ For you, O

Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth. ⁶ Upon
you I have leaned from my birth; it was you who took me from
my mother's womb. My praise is continually of you. ⁷ I have
been like a portent to many, but you are my strong refuge.

⁸ My mouth is filled with your praise, and with your glory all

day long. ⁹ Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength is spent. ¹⁰ For my enemies speak concerning me, and those who watch for my life consult together. ¹¹ They say, "Pursue and seize that person whom God has forsaken, for there is no one to deliver." ¹² O God, do not be far from me; O my God, make haste to help me! ¹³ Let my accusers be put to shame and consumed; let those who seek to hurt me be covered with scorn and disgrace. ¹⁴ But I will hope continually, and will praise you yet more and more. ¹⁵ My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all day long, though their number is past my knowledge. ¹⁶ I will come praising the mighty deeds of the Lord God, I will praise your righteousness, yours alone. ¹⁷ O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. ¹⁸ So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come. ¹⁹ Your power and your righteousness, O God, reach the high heavens. You who have done great things, O God, who is like you? ²⁰ You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again. ²¹ You will increase my honor, and comfort me once again. ²² I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. ²³ My lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have rescued. ²⁴ All day long my tongue will talk of your righteous help, for those who tried to do me harm have been put to shame, and disgraced.

Scripture Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-25
(*Kingdom New Testament*)

Sermon: "How to Pray for Pastors"

Pastor's Prayer for the Congregation, and the Lord's Prayer

Holy God, as your servant-shepherd, I approach the throne of grace on the congregation's behalf. I thank you, Lord, in all my remembrance of them. In every prayer of mine I always make my entreaty and petition for them all with delight. I thank

you for their fellowship — their sympathetic cooperation, contributions, and partnership — in advancing the Gospel. And I am convinced and sure of this very thing: that you have begun a good work in them and will continue until the day of Jesus Christ — right up to the time of his return — developing that good work and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in them.

In the name of Jesus, it is right and appropriate for me to have this confidence and feel this way about them all, because even as they do me, I hold them in my heart as partakers and sharers — one and all with me — of your unmerited favor and spiritual blessing. Lord God, you are my witness and know how I long for and pursue them all with love, in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus.

And this I pray: that their love may abound yet more and more and extend to its fullest development in knowledge and all keen insight — that is, that their love may display itself in greater depth of acquaintance and more comprehensive discernment; so that they may surely learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value — recognizing the highest and best and distinguishing the moral difference. I pray that they may be untainted and pure and unerring and blameless, that — with hearts sincere and certain and unsullied — they may approach the day of the Lord, not stumbling, nor causing others to stumble.

Almighty God, may this people abound in and be filled with the fruits of righteousness, of right standing with God and right doing, which come through Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, to the honor and praise of the One, True God — that your glory may be both manifested and recognized.

I commit myself to you, Father, anew and to them, for I am convinced of this: I shall remain and stay by them all to promote their progress and joy in believing, so that in me they may have abundant cause for exultation and glorifying in Christ Jesus. In the name of Jesus, they will be sure as citizens of the kingdom as to conduct themselves so that their manner of life will be worthy of the good news of Christ.

Thank you, Father, that they are standing firm in united spirit and purpose, striving side by side and contending with a single mind for the faith of the glad tidings which is your Gospel. They are not for a moment frightened or intimidated in anything by their opponents and adversaries, for such constancy and fearlessness will be a clear sign — proof and seal — of their enemy's (the evil one's) destruction. May this be sure evidence to the congregation of their deliverance and salvation from you, our Deliverer.

This fellowship fills up and completes my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention. All this in the name of Jesus Christ we give praise...

Our Father who art in heaven...

Sharing God's Gifts, and Offertory

Offertory song, "I Found it!" by Don Wyrzten

I found it, and you can find it too, I found real life in Jesus, and He changed me thru and thru; I found it, and you can find it too, I found real life in Jesus, Such joy I never knew!

The days are so much brighter, The sun is shinin' all around; the night has turned to day, My fears have flown away, Such peace and joy I've found, For now I'm heaven-bound!

I found it, and you can find it too, I found real life in Jesus, and He changed me thru and thru.

Offering Prayer

Thank you for your continued support in prayer and finances.

Eternal God, we present our tithes and offerings to you now, as a token of our love for you. We know that our financial giving is not the only thing you require. We remember your mandate to take your gospel to the whole world. We remember that you desire us to love you with all our hearts, our minds, and our souls. We remember that you told us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Help us to measure up in our love and service.

Amen.

Benediction

May the God who has blessed you with a "thoughtful faith" continue to expand your minds and hearts as you seek after Truth. May the God who never abandons continue to walk beside you, whether through the darkest valley or the brightest mountaintop. May the God who holds you close through the love of Christ continue to reach out through those called to serve among you as your pastor. And may you always remember the prayer of this pastor, whose love for you never ends, whose appreciation runs deep, and whose life has been shaped by your love and faithfulness.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

***Postlude**

Prayer for Family and Friends

Updates and New Requests This Week

Glory Bragg is recovering from surgery and has been moved to rehab at:

Heritage Community Rehabilitation
2400 Portage St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
Phone: 488-2483

No visitors are allowed because of COVID.

Previous Requests

Pray for Brad and Barb Addis and family as

Brad's mother passed away.

Pray for persecuted Christians around the world.

**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.

In Service to Our Country

Walker Polsinelli
Tyler Smith

Geoff White



Continued FLC Building Project

Phase II Task Force began meeting on April 9, 2002. On this committee was: Don Dailey, Vern Reed, Lee Philport, Steve Buell, Will Emmert, Bonnie Oswald, Mike Asher, Ron Avis, Nellie Pierson, Jeff Moore, Chuck Meyers and Pastor Buff. They began to look at the financial feasibility of the project. After meeting with lenders, it was determined the project should be kept under \$1.4 million. Phase II decided to reduce the plans to the addition of the FLC and connecting offices. Once again, the congregation was notified of the changes and gave their approval.

The Building Committee (BC) felt it would work more efficiently by not selecting a Phase III or IV Task Force, but that sub-committees would be a better plan with oversight by the whole BC. Don Dailey would continue as project chair. Three sub-committees and chairs were appointed: Architectural, Jeff Moore; Finances, Steve Buell; Stewardship/Fundraising (SFR), JoEllen Lathwell.

SFR was the first one up to bat, as our Conference would not approve the project without having raised approx. 1/3 of the monies needed. SFR hired the Timothy Group, a professional fundraising group out of Grand Rapids, for \$21,000 to help us. The SFR started on August 26, 2003 and ended on November 23, 2003. We had raised a total of over \$600,000, which was over the required amount needed to begin. WE WERE OFF TO A GREAT START! NOW WE NEEDED A CONTRACTOR.

The whole BC met with Cornerstone Construction and Deikema/Hamman Construction (DHC) to hear their plans for our building. DHC was selected as both the architect and the construction for the "go ahead". The committee felt DHC had more creativity, more attention to detail and an integrated approach for our project.

A ceremony to begin construction began in late April 2004 by having various people dig a shovel of dirt, with the Vicksburg Commercial there to take pictures and tell our story. We were still doing well; monies raised and contractor selected. WOW.

BUT (isn't there always a "but?"), at the Annual Conference, held on October 14, 2004, the BC had an update to give: We were 50% complete with completion expected by Jan/Feb 2005. However, DHC was ceasing operations and proposed that another firm, Keystone Construction (KC), take over for final completion.

BC had investigated the switch to KC to ensure all subs were paid, that KC was capable of doing the job, and that the church should not owe any extra due to the switch. Oh, if only it could be so simple! A letter from BC, sometime in Oct/Nov 2004, outlines several issues. There were a few discrepancies in amounts due subs, namely at least six major ones. Excerpts from this BC letter: "Painter Andrew Lehman lawsuit, Derhammer Excavating, Alliance Roofing, J.Allen \$4343 for asphalt work, SA Morman has finally resolved to an amount of \$8006.49. Lastly, Gale Plumbing has resolved to \$71,251.60 with a lawsuit if not paid promptly. Trouble was we only had \$65,365.29 left to pay these bills of \$83,601.09! Plus more to come of course.

We finally received an occupant permit in August 2005. Reading between the lines, you may wonder why there were sometimes chunks of time between activity. Space does not permit me to write all of the work that was constantly going on, plus sometimes there was stoppage on our part because we were financially short at times.

Next week... Strife and more strife.

Thoughts, memories and research by Nancy Fulton

For Cheer and Hello

David Bretz	Robert & Carmen Parsons
Barb Griner	Marv Starbuck
Flossie Lang	Mina Willett
Nona Mattheis	Betty Witcher

This Week's Celebrations

Birthdays

10/25 Hank Stamm	10/26 Octavia Valencia
10/26 Wil Emmert	10/27 Ronan Thompson
Tom Holmes	

Welcome!

The service is also transmitted to the church parking lot via FM signal for those who wish to remain in their vehicle.

- Please wear a mask.
- Use the ramp leading into the Family Life Center. Other entrances will be closed.
- Upon entrance to the Family Life Center, your temperature will be checked. Hand sanitizer will be available, and no common surface items will be handed out (bulletins, hymnals, etc.).
- No hugging, other than “air hugs”; avoid crossing within six feet of each other; there will be no coffee and refreshments.
- Restrooms outside the Family Life Center are available.

Donations for Sunshine Bags

Caring Ministries will be making Sunshine Bags for our senior members who are not getting out. We encourage you to donate, if you like, and we would like any items dropped off at church by the welcome center throughout November.

Items can be handmade or purchased, perhaps at the dollar stores. Suggestions include (but are not limited to) bookmark, fish crackers, candy, pads of paper, Bible verse.



please see more on the other side

Coming deadlines

- Items for the November newsletter are due to Polly (reception@vicksburgumc.org) by tomorrow.
- ScripCents orders are due in the church office by 2:00 Monday, Nov. 2.

Midweek prayer meeting

On Wednesday evenings from 8:00 to 8:45, Pastor Greg hosts an online “Midweek Prayer Meeting” when people are invited to log-on for “on-the-spot” prayer.

To join the on-line prayer meeting, please click this link: meet.google.com/hii-yaux-ggs.

Otherwise, to join by telephone, dial: +1 415-604-0783 and enter PIN: 815 342 983#.

Church Council meeting

Everyone is encouraged to log-on to the next Church Council meeting on Monday, Oct. 26, at 7:00 p.m. Click on the link:

meet.google.com/zwy-dzto-yfm

at the scheduled time and you're there. Telephone users call +1 707-397-5473 and enter PIN # 689708202 when prompted.

Would you like to hand out candy?

Heart and Hands Preschool students will be trick or treating outside the church on the sidewalk, and you are welcome to join in their Halloween fun by handing out candy to the kids. If you would like to help out, join them on Wednesday, Oct. 28, from 11:50 to noon; and Thursday, Oct 29, from 11:20 to 11:30 and 12:05 to 12:15. Of course, your face mask is required.

Office hours

The church office is open with limited hours for now. Polly will be in the office Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00 to 1:00 and will continue working from home Mondays and Thursdays. The church is still closed, so call ahead during office hours if you need to drop something off.

please see more on the other side