



First Reformed United Church of Christ

Where People Discover...
The Love of God...
The Power to Love Others...
The Ability to Love Ourselves.

The Worship of God

August 2, 2020
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost



[Odilon Redon](#) 206 / 455

"Jacob Wrestling with the Angel" (1905)

Gathering

"BOLD" indicates congregational response

Prelude

"All God Beyond All Praising"
[Anna Laura Page]

Robert Wilson

Welcome and Invitation to Worship

God meets us in our greatest need and gives us divine presence and provisions.
With gratitude in our hearts let us worship God

Rev. Elizabeth Horton

Opening Prayer

Gennie Lou Byerly

We give thanks to thee, heavenly Father, for the rest and peace of this holy day in which we remember all thy benefits and seek thy face;

for all the tokens of thy goodness in our homes and our lives, especially in this congregation;

for the goodness which thou hast bestowed upon us through our brethren in the faith;

for the guarding grace with which thou hast watched over our bodies and preserved us in times of trial and trouble;

for fellowship with all who call upon thy name;

for the goodness that continually greets and blesses us in the gifts of thy creation;

for the greatest of all gifts which thou hast bestowed upon us in Jesus Christ;

and for the hope in which we begin this great day in his name.

For these and all other gifts, we give thanks, O God our heavenly Father. Amen.

Hymn

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Ellen Peterson

Centering

Gospel Reading

Matthew 14: 13-21

Jonathan Kepley

Now when Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been killed, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Horton

We come believing that we will never have enough,
that what we have is unworthy.
We come fearful of sharing,
fearful of losing our tenuous grip on security,
fearful of touching and knowing the pain of others.
We come overwhelmed by the hunger,
overwhelmed by the suffering of children near and far,
overwhelmed by the endless tales of senseless violence, greed, and death.
We come aching from the weight of the responsibility,
aching from the chilling challenge of knowing our abundance,
aching from the gnawing awareness that we have much to share.
We come clinging to our meager lunches;
bless them, and us.
break them, and us.
share them, and us.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

Blessing and Assurance of Forgiveness

You are a child of God. You are made in the image of God, carefully created to bring God's light and love into this world. God's love is steadfast forever, and there is nothing you can do to change that. So, accept that you are beloved of God, and forgiveness, grace, and peace are yours now and always. Amen.

Passing of the Peace of Christ

Rev. Horton

"May the peace of Christ be with you."

Prayer of Intercession

(based on Matthew 14:13-21)

Rev. Horton and Ellen Peterson

Loving God,
You are our Creator and Sustainer.
When You open Your hand,
You satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.
And so we look to You whenever we are in need,
trusting in Your love and Your abundant goodness.
As You once fed the hungry crowds with five loaves and two small fish,
we ask that You would again fill those who are empty this day.
Pour out Your Spirit on all who hunger and thirst.
We pray for those who are physically hungry—whose stomachs are empty.
We think of the people in our city and around the world

who are facing critical food shortages;
who are suffering the effects of malnutrition and starvation;
and watching helplessly as loved ones die.

Lord have mercy.

We pray for those who are empty emotionally—
who are lonely and long for companionship and love,
who are caught in the grip of depression,
or overwhelmed with grief.

Christ have mercy.

We pray for those who are spiritually empty—
who are troubled, but don't know where to turn;
who long for purpose and meaning, but don't know where to look;
who need You, but do not yet know You.

Lord have mercy.

God, we praise You for Your abundant gifts in our lives.
Pour out Your Spirit on us as well.
Fill us with Your compassion and love,
so that we would willingly share some of our abundance
with those who have need.

Christ have mercy.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,
who came so that all of humanity might come to know
the abundant life that comes from You. Amen.

Proclaiming

Scripture Reading

Genesis 32: 22-31

Rev. Horton

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans,* and have prevailed.' Then Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

Sermon

"Family Stories: Sorry, Not Sorry"

Poem

"Wrestling" by Dave Hopwood

Jeremy Lovell



Jacob was alone by the river Jabbok;
it was growing dark
as a man stepped from the shadows
and wrestled with him until daybreak.

We may often find ourselves alone
by our own river Jabboks,
struggling to win through,
fighting to keep going.

Wrestling with our fears,
with our doubts and uncertainties,
with our questions and lack of answers,
with our past and our future.

In the lonely places,
on the paths of shadows,
in the times when we have nothing to distract us
from ourselves.

Wrestling to be the people
we wish we could be.

Wrestling with the realities,
with the lack of splendour in everyday life.
Jacob wrestled until daybreak,
and as the wrestling went on
he realized he was struggling with God.

The God who was doing his best to bring change.
Jacob walked away with a limp
and a brand new name.
He had become - "one who wrestles".
And to this day, the wrestling goes on...

Responding

Hymn
Invitation to Give and Serve

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

Ellen Peterson
Rev. Horton

Sending

Benediction
Blessing
Postlude

"I Sing a Song of the Saints of God"
[Franklin Ritter]

Robert Wilson

Prayer for Sending

O Wrestler contending with us until daybreak, holding us in the grip of your argument, grappling with our questions and doubts, You who strive to deepen us through struggle, and strengthen us through adversity: Hold on to us now in that fierce love that will never let us go. Bless us, as you name us, as those who have prevailed.

Join our **"Fellowship & Prayer Concerns" Zoom Chat [HERE](#)**
after worship from 12-12:30pm and catch up with your church friends!
(Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Password: 3n7IX8)

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"Wrestling" by Dave Hopwood used with permission

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WEEKLY CALENDAR

August 2

9:45AM Adult Bible Study on Genesis led by Rev. Susan Morris via Zoom

In the study guide book: Chapter 8; Daily reading: Genesis 37; 38; 39; 40; and 41

Join the Meeting [HERE](#). (Meeting ID: 871 3599 3948 & Password: 418121)

11:00AM Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) and Facebook [HERE](#).

12:00PM Join us [HERE](#) for Fellowship & Prayer Concerns via Zoom (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Password: 3n7IX8)

August 4:

12:00PM 2CFAR: Crucial Conversations on Faith and Race via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).

(Meeting ID: 873 4191 8684 Password: 222495)

7:00PM Adult Book Study:

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.

Join the Meeting at [HERE](#). (Meeting ID: 859 2701 0393 & Password: 7x6nQw)

August 9:

9:45AM Adult Bible Study on Genesis led by Rev. Susan Morris via Zoom

In the study guide book: Chapter 9; Daily reading: Genesis 42; 43-44; 45; 46:1-27; and 46:28 – 47:31

Join the Meeting [HERE](#).

11:00AM Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) and Facebook [HERE](#).

12:00PM Join us [HERE](#) for Fellowship & Prayer Concerns via Zoom (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Password: 3n7IX8)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, August 16 at 4:00PM there will be a "DRIVE THROUGH" BLESSING OF BACKPACKS. This will be held in the parking lot of the Education Building. Mark your calendars now. More details will come later.

Sunday, August 23 there will be another Prayer Vigil: A Call to End Racism. More details will be provided as the date gets closer.

OUR CHURCH AT PRAYER

OUR MEMBERS:

*Margot Everhart, Lisa Price, Bill Walser, Patti Lovell, Jeff Hutchens, Deanna Michael

OUR MEMBERS AT HOME AND IN CARE FACILITIES:

Peggy Bates, Janelle Bunn, Marzell Crotts, Ruth Essick, Pattie Everhart, Vogen Everhart, Lib & Jimbo Hinkle, Marguerite Leonard, Bob Shaak, Lib Sink, Katherine Skipper, Carolyn Spivey, Adena Wall

Piedmont Crossing:

Mary Berrier, Doris Flynt

OUR FRIENDS:

*Ben & Anna Lovell and their parents (Jerry and Patti's nephew, his wife), *Jonelle Parker (friend of Frank Leonard), Angie Bouchard (Lee and Ellen Bouchard's youngest daughter)

**Indicates newly added. Names will remain on the list for 4 weeks. To add a name to the prayer list please fill out a prayer request card located on the backs of the pews or call the church office (336-248-2617).*

~AUGUST CELEBRATIONS~

BIRTHDAYS

2nd

Eugenia Holste
Karla Loper
Jerry Lovell

4th

Lynn Klopp

6th

Lucas Peterson

ANNIVERSARIES

3rd

Bill & Carolyn Robbins

7th

John & Vicky Gray