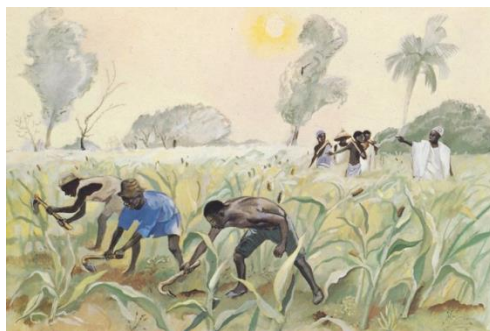


First Reformed United Church of Christ

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

The Worship of God

September 20, 2020
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



The Late Arriving Workers by Jesus Mafa

Gathering

“BOLD” indicates congregational response

Prelude

"Prelude on 'St. Agnes'"
[Gordon Young]

Robert Wilson

Welcome and Invitation to Worship

Rev. Elizabeth Horton

Call to Worship

Jerry & Patti Lovell

When the night comes, look to the stars—filling the sky with light!

God's word is a light, shining bright in the shadows.

When the shadows fall, look to the stars—spread across the universe, farther than any eye has seen.

God is everywhere present, whether we go to the ends of the earth or depths of the sea.

When you feel alone, look to the stars—more than we even have numbers to count.

God's grace is beyond imagining, beyond language, beyond counting.

When you cannot see the sun, Look to the stars—signs of God's promise, shining through all generations.

Let us join together to worship God, the One whose generosity is as big as the stars!

Hymn

"Take My Life"
Members of First Reformed UCC Choir

Centering

New Testament Reading

Philippians 1: 20-30

Buddy Lohr

It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously

granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Horton

Let us confess our sins together.

**Like our fathers and mothers of faith, we complain, Holy One,
In this wilderness that is 2020,
filled with upheaval and discord, we complain.**

**In traffic. At the store. On social media,
in the umpteenth Zoom meeting this week, or day,
out loud, and in our hearts, we complain.**

**We complain about how much we miss the way things used to be,
about how much we hate the way things are,
we complain about our concern for what may be coming next.**

**Forgive us, Author of Life, for our complaints,
and for pulling away from your compassion and care.**

**Tune our hearts to your Presence, that we may draw near to you,
and in turn draw near to others. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness and Passing the Peace

Rev. Horton

Special Music

"Church Is More than Just a Building"
Members of First Reformed UCC Choir

Church is more than a weekly gathering. Church is faith that's come alive,
Filling hearts and minds with passion, peace and hope that ever abide.
Even as the building's empty, we are touched by the deepest of grace.
When the holy lives within us we are in a holy place.

Proclaiming

Gospel Reading

Matthew 20: 1-16

Rev. Horton

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Sermon

"Building the Church One Rock at a Time: Upon the Rock of Generosity"

Responding

Hymn

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

Ellen Peterson

Sending

Benediction

Rev. Horton

Postlude

"Postlude on 'Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones'"
[Matthew McConnell]

Robert Wilson

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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OUR CHURCH AT PRAYER

OUR MEMBERS:

*John Potts, *Charm Ketner, Kelly Greathouse, Jasmin Cruz, Margot Everhart, Lisa Price, Patti Lovell, Jeff Hutchens, Deanna Michael

OUR MEMBERS AT HOME AND IN CARE FACILITIES:

Peggy Bates, Janelle Bunn, Marzell Crofts, 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:

M.C. Hinkle (Ben Hale's uncle), Barbara Miller (Eddie Yates' mother), Vernon Powell (Eulene Shepherd's nephew-in-law), Elania & Nora Koontz and Hutson & Grayson East (cousins and friends of Harriette & Clifton Murphy), Buddy Hedrick (Frankie Hedrick's husband), Ben & Anna Lovell and their parents (Jerry and Patti's nephew, his wife), 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).*

~SEPTEMBER CELEBRATIONS~

BIRTHDAYS

20th ...Glenyce Fulton
...Matthew Johnson
24th ...Alice Gray
...Jordan McCarn
26th ...Mark Smith
...Cathy Whitley

ANNIVERSARIES

20th ...Brad & Molly Robertson

WEEKLY CALENDAR

September 20:

- 9:30AM Adult Bible Study: Exodus via Zoom [HERE](#)
- 10:45AM 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)

September 21:

- 11:00AM Worship Committee Meeting (Fellowship Hall)
- 7:00PM Youth Ministry Team Meeting via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 824 6490 4861)

September 22:

- 12:00PM 2CFAR: Crucial Conversations on Faith and Race via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 873 4191 8684 & Password: 222495)

September 23:

- 5:30PM Middle School Youth Meeting via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 859 2751 2411)

September 25:

- 12:00PM ALL ITEMS FOR THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER DUE TO THE OFFICE

September 27:

- 9:30AM Adult Bible Study: Exodus via Zoom [HERE](#)
- 10:45AM 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)
- 7:00PM Prayer Vigil: A Call to End Racism outside at 1st Lutheran Church at 320 South State Street