

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos
July 23, 2023
Eighth Sunday After Pentecost



Preparation: “It is easy to sit in judgment of Jacob and Laban. We can sit comfortably on a Sunday morning and condemn their actions and their culture and thank God we have evolved. But that would mean we miss the point of the narrative completely. They are not “them.” They are us. We are far from perfect. Families are messy and often broken. We hurt each other intentionally and unintentionally. We act in our own best interest and against the greater good of others. We forget to ask those with less power about decisions that impact their lives. To look on this family is to look straight into human brokenness.”
-- Rev. Dr. Beth Tanner.

Prelude *Aria* Elizabeth Turner
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist (1700-1756)

Invitation to our Shared Ministry Pastor Lisa Schrott

Call to Worship (adapted from Psalm 150 from *The Message*) Doug Paterson, Liturgist

One: Keep your eyes open for God, watch for God’s works;

All: be alert for signs of God’s presence.

One: For God remembers the Covenant—

All: for a thousand generations God’s word has been good.

One: It is the Covenant God made with Abraham, the same oath God swore to Isaac,

All: The very statute God established with Jacob, the eternal Covenant with Israel.

One: When they didn’t count for much, a mere handful, and strangers at that, wandering from country to country, drifting from pillar to post, God blessed them.

All: Let us worship our God of presence and blessing.

* **Hymn #307** *God of Grace and God of Glory*, vs. 1-4
[CWM Rhonnda]

Prayer of Confession Pastor Lisa Schrott

One: God never forgets God’s promises; God’s covenant endures in each new generation. We are free to speak the truth about our lives because God’s faithfulness embraces us as we examine our hearts.

All: God of mystery, God of life, we imagine that we are capable judges of power and wisdom and goodness. We trust our own standards; we separate and categorize; we mark the performance of others. We fail to trust your power, hidden in all things. We fail to watch for you, working out your purposes. Gracious God, hidden and manifest, transform our withered imaginations until we yield the judgments we trust to a love we cannot control. Amen.

Promise of the Gospel Pastor Lisa Schrott

One: What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Nothing we have done, nothing we will ever do, is enough to separate us from the love of God made known in

Jesus Christ. Please turn to your neighbor and share these words of assurance, our promise of the Gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia. Amen!

Passing of the Peace

Pastor Lisa Schrott

One: As a forgiven people, let us greet each other, sharing the peace of Christ. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you. *Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.*

* Act of Praise #581

Gloria Patri

Children's Sermon

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Prayer of Illumination

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Holy God, we try to fix and fasten you, but you will not be constrained. You are love in motion: always breathing us into being, calling us to serve, and sustaining us in the wilderness. Still our hearts and busy minds so we hear your Word spoken into our lives today and always. Amen.

Scriptures

Genesis 29:15-28

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Sermon

Connecting Through Imperfect Relationships

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Affirmation of Faith (from the Confession of Belhar 10.5)

(in unison)

We believe

that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ;

that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells;

that God's life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's life-giving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.

Special Music

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Lobe Den Herren

PCO Handbell Quintet

arr. Jason Krug

Kathi & Dave Cook, Linda & Lou Cravotta, Sarah Mayhew

Offering

Doug Paterson, Liturgist

Invitation

Offertory

Gigue

Elizabeth Turner

*Doxology #606

*Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

Doug Paterson, Liturgist

The Lord's Prayer "...forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..."

* **Hymn #372**

O For a World, vs. 1-5
[Azmon]

* **Benediction**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Postlude

Postlude on *Azmon*
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Robert Hobby

* *Please rise in body or spirit*

Ushers: Brett & Lynn Cone, Deb & Joel Major

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to the Cones for preparing the coffee and to Mickey Martin and Barbara Dorr for supplying snacks.

Adult Education: Pastor Lisa continues a 4-week Bible study on the last book of the New Testament, the book of Revelation. Why has this book received so much attention in the media and yet many of us don't understand what is actually written in the scripture? This morning we will look at an overview of Chapters 1-11.

Next Week's Scripture: Mark 5:35-43

Next Week's Adult Education: An overview of Chapters 12-22 in the book of Revelation.

The Prayer of Confession and Assurance of the Gospel are adapted from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A*, Volume 2; Westminster John Knox Press. 2014. The Affirmation of Faith is from *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*. Part I Book of Confessions. Office of the General Assembly Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); 2016.

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Rev. Dr. Lisa Schrott, Pastor/Head of Staff

Rev. Rebekah Anderson, Associate Pastor

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, Organist

Irene Shutt, Handbell Choir Director

Edward Ennen, Sexton

Anna Thiel, Office Manager