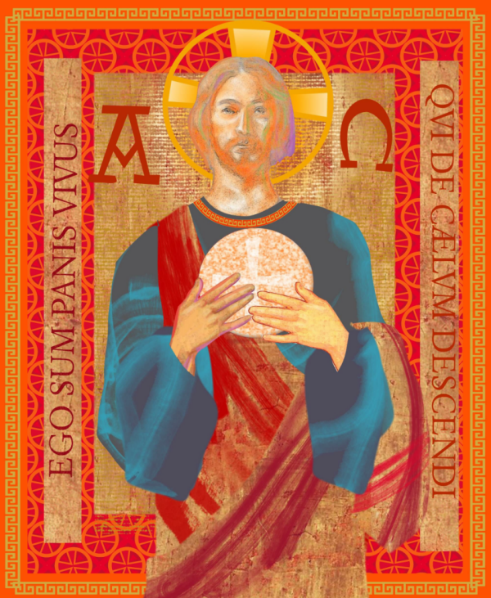
**Saginaw First Free Methodist Church**

**Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**August 22, 2021**



*“This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.’"*

*(John 6:58)*

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**Proper 16 (21)**

**August 22, 2021**

**Prelude**

**\*\*Greeting/Announcements**

**\*Call to Worship** (*spoken responsively*)

L: At the start there was love

**P: And life began from God**

L: Creation fell, but the Creator gives

**P: The promise of a brighter day**

L: Love came down, hope was found

**P: Life began again**

L: A brand new start

**P: The promise of a better way**

**\*Opening Hymn:** “The Church’s One Foundation” #668 (vv. 1-4)

**The church's one foundation**

**Is Jesus Christ, her Lord**

**She is his new creation**

**By water and the Word**

**From heav’n he came and sought her**

**To be his holy bride**

**With His own blood He bought her**

**And for her life He died**

**Elect from ev’ry nation**

**Yet one o'er all the earth**

**Her charter of salvation**

**One Lord, one faith, one birth**

**One holy name she blesses**

**Partakes one holy food**

**And to one hope she presses**

**With ev’ry grace endued**

**‘Mid toil and tribulation**

**And tumult of her war**

**She waits the consummation**

**Of peace forevermore**

**Till with the vision glorious**

**Her longing eyes are blest**

**And the great church victorious**

**Shall be the church at rest**

**Yet she on earth hath union**

**With the God the Three in One**

**And mystic sweet communion**

**With those whose rest is won**

**O happy ones and holy**

**Lord, give us grace that we**

**Like them, the meek and lowly**

**On high may dwell with thee**

**\*Invocation and Lord’s Prayer**

L: Creator of the earth, you spoke the world into existence and sustain all things by your life-giving word. Consider the toil and sorrow of the people of the earth and, in your compassion, have mercy on the world. Teach us how to rightly steward the gift of your creation. That the resources of the world would be used to your honor and glory. Incline our hearts to you, as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples…

**P: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**\*Gloria Patri**

**Glory be to the Father​**

**And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.​**

**As it was in the beginning​**

**Is now and ever shall be.​**

**World without end. ​**

**Amen. Amen.​**

**First Scripture Lesson:** 1 Kings 8:22-30, 41-43

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand.

Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, ‘There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.’ Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant my father David.

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive.”

“Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name, for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, when a foreigner comes and prays toward this house, then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.

**Prayer of Confession**

L: Most gracious and loving God - we have tasted your goodness in days gone by and it has satisfied us - but now with this new day we turn to you again for the bread of life that you have prepared, so our spirits may grow calm, our vision be clear, and our purpose be unified…

**P:** **Merciful Lord, it does not surprise me that you forgive completely the sins of those who repent. I am not surprised that you remain faithful to those who revile you. The mercy that comes from you fills the whole earth. It was by your mercy we were created, and by your mercy you redeemed us by sending your son. Your mercy is the light by which sinners find you and good people return to you. Your justice is constantly tempered by your mercy; so you refuse to punish us as we deserve. Your mercy is faithful and true. You took on humanity, even to death. There is no greater love than this. Amen.**

**Affirmation of Faith:** Psalm 84

**P:** **How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.** **Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose strength is in you…They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion. O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed. For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor. No good thing does the LORD withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.**

**Hymn of Affirmation:** “Jesus the Very Thought of Thee” #139 (vv.1,3,5)

**Jesus the very thought of Thee**

**With sweetness fills my breast**

**But sweeter far Thy face to see**

**And in Thy presence rest**

**O hope of every contrite heart**

**O joy of all the meek**

**To those who fall, how kind Thou art**

**How good to those who seek**

**Jesus, our only joy be Thou**

**As Thou our prize wilt be**

**Jesus, be Thou our glory now**

**And thro’ eternity**

**Second Scripture Lesson****:** Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet, put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

**Passing of the Peace**

**Prayers of the People**

L: Lord in Your Mercy…

**P: Hear our prayer.**

**Gospel Lesson**: John 6:56-69

“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”

But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.”

For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him.

And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.

So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

**Sermon**

**Prayer of Response**

**Hymn of Response:** “My Song Is Love Unknown” (vv.1-2,4)

**My song is love unknown, my Savior’s love to me**

**Love to the loveless shown, that they might lovely be**

**O who am I, that for my sake**

**My God should take frail flesh and die?**

**My God should take frail flesh and die?**

**God left the richest throne, salvation to bestow**

**But Christ as flesh and bone, the world refused to know**

**But, O my Friend, my Friend in deed**

**Who at my need did life expend**

**Who at my need did life expend**

**I sing my plain belief, one song my heart outpours**

**Never was pain nor grief, never was love like yours**

**This is my friend, in whose sweet praise**

**I all my days could gladly spend**

**I all my days could gladly spend**

**Invitation of Offering**

L:Our compassionate God has provided us with abundant life. With this love in your heart and food in your hand, give so the whole world experiences these gifts. Give thanks to God, as we collect this morning’s tithes and offerings.

**\*Doxology**

**\*Prayer**

**\*Closing Hymn**: “Standing on the Promises” #687 (vv.1,4-5)

**Standing on the promises of Christ my king**

**Through eternal ages let his praises ring**

**Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing**

**Standing on the promises of God**

**Standing, standing,**

**Standing on the promises of God my Savior**

**Standing, standing**

**I’m standing on the promises of God**

**Standing on the promises of Christ, the Lord**

**Bound to Him eternally by love’s strong cord**

**Overcoming daily by the Spirit’s sword**

**Standing on the promises of God**

**Standing, standing,**

**Standing on the promises of God my Savior**

**Standing, standing**

**I’m standing on the promises of God**

**Standing on the promises I cannot fall**

**Listening every moment to the Spirit’s call**

**Resting in my Savior as my all in all**

**Standing on the promises of God**

**Standing, standing,**

**Standing on the promises of God my Savior**

**Standing, standing**

**I’m standing on the promises of God**

**\*Benediction**

L: May God arm you with truth and righteousness; May Christ Jesus give you words of Spirit and life; and may the Holy Spirit draw you near to God’s presence. Be blessed with honor and grace, as you go in peace to love and serve. Amen.