



EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

July 26, 2020
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas
Link to worship videos available at: www.fpcbryan.org

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Sweet Hour of Prayer

arr. Melody Bober

WELCOME

We welcome you to worship today.

We remember the words from the New Testament letter to "The Hebrews," chapter 11: "By faith, Moses left Egypt, not fearing the anger of the Empire King - whom Moses could see - but pressing on and trusting the Eternal King he could not see."

HYMN NO. 2

Come, Thou Almighty King

ITALIAN HYMN

**Come, thou almighty King, help us thy name to sing;
help us to praise: Father, all glorious, o'er all victorious,
come, and reign over us, Ancient of Days.**

**Come, thou incarnate Word, merciful, mighty Lord,
our prayer attend. Come, and thy people bless, and give thy word success;
Spirit of holiness, on us descend.**

**Come, holy Comforter, thy sacred witness bear in this glad hour.
Thou who almighty art, now rule in every hear,
And ne'er from us depart, Spirit of power.**

**To thee, great One in Three, eternal praises be,
hence evermore! Thy sovereign majesty may we in glory see,
and to eternity love and adore.**

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

Let us pray ... While we may often, O God, think we know effective solutions to problems in our lives, our true help is in you alone. Receive our praise for your relentless love claiming us, seeking us, and making us new. As we confess before you our wanderings and sin, hear our prayers in these moments of silence.

O most loving, passionate, and compassionate One, we acknowledge before you our pursuing of interests and inclinations which we think will fulfill and satisfy in one way or another. We disregard or forget how you are, ever yearning for us and encouraging our turning again to you.

O Giver of mercy: Although we have failed you, failed ourselves, and failed others, journey with us from your love, for the sharing of life in your love, so that – day by day – we faithfully serve you among all of your people in the way and spirit of Jesus Christ.

Friends, let us hear and share with gladness the blessed news of the Gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

ONE HUNDREDTH

SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 19:4,20; 20:1-3; 24:3-4,12; 32:15-16,19; 34:1-2,4-5,8-10

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

Majesty of the Summit/Brokenness at the Base-camp/Journeying Still

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Today our prayers of thanksgiving and intercession are guided by the words of the song, “God, the Sculptor of the Mountains.” I will offer a sentence of direction for our prayers, which will be followed by silence, then David and Michelle will lead us in song, one stanza at a time.

Let us consider and offer our praise to God for innumerable gifts in life.

(10 seconds of silence, then st. 1 ...)

**God the sculptor of the mountains, God the miller of the sand, God the jeweler of the heavens,
God the potter of the land: you are womb of all creation; we are formless; shape us now.**

Let us consider and offer our thanks for God's transforming grace.

(10 seconds of silence, then st. 2 ...)

**God the nuisance of the Pharaoh, God the cleaver of the sea, God the pillar in the darkness,
God the beacon of the free: you are fount of all deliverance; we are aimless; lead us now.**

Let us consider and offer our lives with gratitude as God journeys among us for newness of life.

(10 seconds of silence, then st. 3 ...)

**God the dresser of the vineyard, God the planter of the wheat, God the reaper of the harvest,
God the source of all we eat: you are host at every table; we are hungry; feed us now.**

Let us consider our lives ever blessed by God's love which continually works for healing and for a just and equitable peace.

(10 seconds of silence, then st. 4 ...)

**God the unexpected infant, God the calm determined youth, God the table-turning prophet,
God the resurrected truth: you are present every moment; we are searching; meet us now.**

As we trust you to meet us again, O steadfast One, hear us praying with the words Jesus taught:

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on 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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

We are marching in the light of God; we are marching in the light of God.

We are marching in the light of God; we are marching in the light of, the light of God.

We are marching, marching, we are marching, marching, we are marching in the light of, the light of God.

We are marching, marching, we are marching, marching, we are marching in the light of God.

“...praying...”

“...serving...”

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

This Little Light of Mine

arr. Michelle Lassiter

+ + + + +

UPCOMING ACTION ITEM FOR CONGREGATIONAL VOTE

The 2019 Congregational Nominating Committee (AJ Renold (Mod.), Libby Dempsey (Vice Mod.), and Bunny Douglas, Scott Shafer, Imogene Veters, Marilyn Wright (members-at-large) will soon be presenting for congregational vote a slate of nominees to fill the five member-at-large positions on the 2020 Congregational Nominating Committee. These nominees will come from names suggested for nomination in Fall 2019. **Look for an email in your inbox or a letter in your mailbox from the church in the near future related to this action item.**

Especially in this time, visit the church website, www.fpcbryan.org, for the newsletter, announcements, worship bulletins, devotionals for children and adults, updates, etc.

Like us on **Facebook** at: www.facebook.com/FPCBryan

NEW!!! on **Instagram**: www.instagram.com. Search for and follow **fpcbryantx1867** and/or **fpcbryan_youth**

Help FPC-Bryan’s YouTube channel achieve 400 subscribers to be eligible for a custom url!
On www.youtube.com, search for First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas, then click **SUBSCRIBE**

Our newsletter, **The Chimes**, continues to be available online, emailed to FPC-Bryan friends, and mailed to local FPC-Bryan members with the printed bulletin and sermon to those without technology. The deadline for the next issue of the newsletter is **NOON, AUGUST 2**, and will be distributed on Wednesday, August 5. This newsletter will cover news from August 13-26.

STAY CONNECTED! with others in this community of faith at Church Updates—FPC-Bryan’s online tool for church-related announcements, ways to serve, and current prayer needs. This online tool is **“REAL TIME,”** and users receive a weekly reminder email on Thursdays to view new posts.

Login and create your password-protected account at <https://fpcbtx.churchupdates.org/login>. For more information, contact Karen in the church office, 979.823.8073 or office@fpcbryan.org.



A WARM WELCOME!

We are delighted to have you worship with us today.

WORSHIP NOTES

PREACHER

Rev. Ted Foote

LITURGISTS

Rev. Emily K. Béghin

Rev. Dr. George E. Klett

MUSICIANS

Michelle Lassiter, *Pianist*

David Kipp,

Director of Music Ministries

COVER ART

“The Covenant with Moses and
with the People of Israel”

One of 11 faceted windows
in sanctuary of

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

CHANCEL FLOWERS

In loving memory of

Doris & Bill Todd and

our daughter Lee Ann Palermo

by Kathleen & Frank Palermo

AUDIO/VIDEO

Emily K. Béghin

COPYRIGHT LICENSES

Select hymns from

Glory to God:

The Presbyterian Hymnal

CCLI 196019

OneLicense.net A-718836

CVLI 504246321



THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JULY 26, 2020

ONLINE WORSHIP-to view, visit www.fpcbryan.org

5:45pm Youth (GR 6-12) Sunday Fun Day-DIGITAL

(Watch your inbox for details via email!)

MONDAY, JULY 27, 2020

TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2020

7:00pm Children's Center Ministry Committee-ZOOM

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2020

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020

FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2020

7:30pm **Youth** (GR 6-12) **Gourmet S'mores Gathering: A Farewell for**

Youth Coordinators Julie & Aaron-FPC Basketball Court

(Please wear a mask, bring a lawn chair, a skewer for

Roasting marshmallows, and three copies of your

favorite picture from an FPC youth event/gathering.)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2020

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, AUGUST 2, 2020

ONLINE WORSHIP-to view, visit www.fpcbryan.org

For regularly scheduled meetings/gatherings,
please be in touch with your group's
moderator, leader, coordinator, or facilitator
to determine alternate meeting options/platforms.

First Presbyterian Church | 1100 Carter Creek Parkway | Bryan, Texas 77802

PH. 979.823.8073 | FAX. 979.822.7063 | Website: www.fpcbryan.org | Email: office@fpcbryan.org

Find “First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas” on FACEBOOK

The Covenant Windows

Designed from Biblical stories by the Smith Glass Co. of Ft. Worth in 1966, eleven windows gird the nave, proclaiming the theme of God's covenant with God's people. The five windows at the congregation's left, moving toward the entrance, portray the covenants of the Old Testament. In counterbalance, the five to the right of the chancel depict the covenants of the New Testament. The window above the main entrance behind the balcony is an expansive Nativity scene.

A covenant is a solemn and binding agreement made by two or more individuals or groups, to do or to keep from doing, a specified action with understood accountability. God's compact with human beings is a commitment, a promise—absolute and certain.

The history of the people of Israel commences with the covenant of God with Israel. Abraham, at the direction of God, left Ur of the Chaldees and journeyed to a land where God promised to make his descendants a great people. The origin of Israel's religion is the covenant given to Moses at Mount Sinai and is referred to as the "old covenant."

The "new covenant" is God's gift of His Son in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. So it was that, in the beginning of the Third century, Tertullian began to refer to the two collections of scripture as the Old and New Testaments—by literal definition, the old and new covenants.

The Covenant with Moses and with the People of Israel

God spoke, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me." And God gave Moses the tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God. From these divine yet simple edicts of God the very core and substance of all law emanates. This window vividly portrays the covenant made with Moses and the people of Israel. At its center is Moses receiving the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments of God were inscribed. At his right is an eagle, recalling God's statement to Moses that "... I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself." Below are the twelve pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel, and, in the window's lower frame is the altar for the blood offering which seals God's covenant with God's people.

Majesty at the Summit / Brokenness at the Base-camp / Journeying Still

Exodus 19:4,20; 20:1-3; 24:3-4, 12; 32:15-16,19; 34:1-2,4-5,8-10

July 26, 2020

Ted V. Foote, Jr.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

There was majesty at the summit. There was brokenness at the base-camp. And the journey continues of God's people influenced by God's Spirit. At this moment, however, we don't want to get ahead of ourselves. When I met the Smith Glass Company's Ten Commandments window in 2007, I was 54 years old. For 13 years, I have noticed it at least weekly, but neither learned much from it nor had my life influenced by it. More recently, however, that has changed. Since David (several months ago) and Emily (more recently) suggested that a series of worship services from the Scriptural backgrounds of the windows, the Moses and Ten Commandments' window has been both teaching me and influencing my life. Since 2007, I've thought this window portrayed Moses' first time up the mountain in relation to the Ten Commandments. While preparing for our worship today, I no longer hold that opinion. Exodus indicates that Moses actually ascended the mountain at least three times related to the Ten Commandments. The first time, God communicated to him The Ten as by dictation (19:20; 20:1-3). At that point, Moses returned to base-camp down below, told the people, and then wrote down the dictation which he remembered – maybe upon papyrus, or the equivalent of today's bonded paper. Moses then also built twelve pillars to represent the twelve ancestral tribes or communities of Israel (24:3-4), pictured in the faceted glass window. Then God called Moses to the mountain's summit a second time to give him a gift of Ten Commandments inscribed or chiseled into two stone tablets, provided by God (24:12; 32:15-16). After experiencing the majesty of God reaching out at the summit of the mountain not once, but twice, when Moses was descending to the people's base-camp, he discovered what the story indicates was out-of-control behavior. In a fit of uncontrolled rage, Moses threw God's gift to the ground, breaking the stone tablets and their divine chiseled words. After Moses' regains his calm, God calls him back up the mountain a third time, but this time God tells him in advance, "You bring two tablets of stone yourself as the replacements! I'll chisel again, but you bring your own tablets!" (34:1-2,4-5,8-10). And so Moses did. And so God did. So the Smith Glass Company's 4th window from 1966 here pictures not Moses first or second trip to the summit of the mountain, but either his second or third trip to the summit of the mountain.

The extended story from Exodus reminds us how God is relentless for freedom against Pharaoh or any empire, so that neither Pharaoh nor any empire can have the last word over the slavery of a people. We also are reminded how God is relentless in relation to a people who are determined to live without discipline and who are determined to live with careless abandon simply because they are too undisciplined to cultivate within themselves helpful measures of patience and steadfastness. From the summit, majestic God is relentless. Even at work among the people in their base-camp and on their journey beyond the base-camp and away from the mountain, God is relentlessly present with them and for them, as uneasy a relationship as that can be. And surely it was uneasy! Have you ever had a disagreement or two or three so severe with someone close to you that either that person or you – or both of you – went a long time without speaking? Don't you wonder if it wasn't that way between God and Moses? between Moses and the people? and between God and the people during those times? and that it would be like that "down the road" in days to come? As the story goes, though, even when they – as my mother would say – "(even when they) are so put out with each other" and not speaking to one another, God goes with that stiff-necked people for the sake of the seeming "fools' errand" God has committed to undertake with this covenant. A covenant, you know, is a "deal" pledged and a promise made to stay accountable/ to stay faithful/ to stay in relationship through thick and thin – through the people's thick headedness – Oh, there's plenty of "people thick-headedness" for God to deal with – and there's plenty of the people's thin will, thin courage, and thin perseverance for God to deal with. As the story goes, though, God who is a primary character when Moses experiences majesty on the mountain, God who is a primary character when there is out-of-control behavior at the basecamp due to people being impulsive,

impatient, and indulgent, God – best we understand – is certainly pushed to where God also experiences some “thin,” maybe “a lot of thin” – thin patience.

Some of you have heard me say, “All the world’s peoples, if they knew me, should be glad that I’m not God, because I’d have given up on the world a long time ago!” The good news for the world is that I am not God, and that God does not give up on the world ever – through our thick headedness, our thin will, thin courage, and thin perseverance. God does not give up on the world, or on you, or on me, or on anyone, but – instead – even beyond the summit, even beyond the base-camp, God continues the journey with people then and with people today.

A few weeks ago, two Presbyterian elders with whom I served in Tulsa from 1994 until 2007 suggested a book to me via email conversations, because the book had created an important stirring of their understanding of God, their perception of God, and their experience of God along the journey in life as God is portrayed through Judaism. It is enough for you to know of these two elders that they both have eyes that can dance with laughter. They both have experienced multiple challenges and heartbreak; and both have been led here and there down paths in their life-and-faith journeys which they did not plan and maybe would not “have ordered on Amazon to be delivered to them” if that were possible. One of the two is, by nature, long on patience and kindness. When all of her other qualities are washed away, empathy will still remain. The other is, by nature, long on curmudgeonliness. She takes no “guff” from anyone unless they can demonstrate that there’s credibility in their feed-back or “push-back.” One still lives in Oklahoma. The other now lives in New Mexico. I guess they stay in contact, because each mentioned how the two of them have discussed, and how they each have found illuminating Sarah Hurwitz’s 2019 faith memoir, “Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life – in Judaism (after Finally Choosing to Look There).”

Ms. Hurwitz is today not yet forty years old. She is a graduate of both Harvard University and Harvard Law School. She was raised by her parents as mostly a “holiday only” celebrant of the Jewish religious tradition. As an adult, though, her life-and-faith journey veered to where, as her memoir indicates, she discovered a vitality in Judaism which she had earlier missed and overlooked. While engaged in her studies, she became aware of a story from the Talmud (which is a collection of interpretations complementary to the Hebrew Scriptures). In that Talmudic story, after Moses shatters the first set of stone tablets God carved, the people at the base-camp – who realized their out-of-control behavior – gathered up the pieces; and when Moses came back from his third meeting with God bearing the replacement stone tablets, the broken fragments of the first set were kept for posterity in the ark of the covenant with the replacement tablets (p.199), thus carrying on their subsequent journey that reminder of their own brokenness. Jesus was Jewish. He took the teachings of God through Moses and summarized them into two commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself” (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18b; Mark 12:29-31). And Jesus – teaching and living that summarizing of The Ten – experienced brokenness on a cross.

As curmudgeonly as I can be, I do not doubt what Sarah Hurwitz has discovered: How, in the mystery of God’s faithfulness, we grow to sense about self and to sense in life that God has communicated the strongest of covenants with God’s people. This fourth window and its ten sister windows remind us how it is part of God’s wisdom for our journey that we become wise about the brokenness in our own lives, because it’s always with us, as – thank God – God is with us as well, calling us every day and in every chapter of history – calling us – to practice both faithfulness and discovery, and to remember daily – if we cannot remember ten – the two which Jesus summarized. On the journey where faithfulness and discovery are valued, love from God for all of God’s people will grow. The majesty on the summit is important, but our lives are shaped by God’s being relentlessly, tenaciously faithful among us at the base-camp (where our brokenness is evident), and our lives are shaped by God’s being relentlessly and tenaciously faithful all along the road and roads beyond. – All honor and praise be to God.