

## Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 10:30am

**Word for the Week:** “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31 (NLT)

### Worship Info:

- **Worship continues** to be offered **in-person and online**; please make choices that you are comfortable with regarding the COVID-19 virus.
- Here's this week's **in-home worship** package for those who are unable to join us.
- Click on this link to join via **Zoom**, or copy and paste it in your browser:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86233774377?pwd=cmF5NkRBVmNqdEEveTBoRTRZbmppdz09>
- Enter the following as prompted: **Meeting ID:** 862 3377 4377    **Password:** 029381
- Or join **by phone** at (312) 626-6799 (Chicago), using the same info (charges may apply).
- **Youtube Live** is another option - worship without using Zoom!
- Go to the linked page, wait for a "Live Now" video - click on it and away you go! Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCleukD6raE5lms732qpdDUA>
- **Share these links** with family and friends! **Visit our Web page & Facebook page!**
- Please **contact Pastor Kevin** at (217) 692-2543 if you need help connecting.

### **Tech Note: Liturgist Spotlitged and Unmuted/Pastor Muted**

### Announcements:

**Liturgist, Slide 1**

- Good Morning! Thank you worshipping for with us today! Here are a few things to be aware of before we get started:
- **Charge Conference** is on October 24<sup>th</sup> – please plan to be here at 2pm.
- **Blanket Sunday** will be on October 25<sup>th</sup> – please remember your blanket offering!
- Please submit prayer requests on the bulletin tear offs – it is **hard to hear** them accurately otherwise. You may also **chat, text, email, or call!**
- Finally, the Men thank all who helped and supported their Pork Burger Dinner!

### Prelude

**Pianist**

### **Tech Note: Spotlight and Unmute Pastor (Yeti), Mute Liturgist**

### Bell Ringer

**Live or? Slide 2**

### Greeting

**Pastor, Slide 3**

Good Morning Blue Mound! Welcome to the 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost! Fall has fallen – or has it? Pork burger dinner. Thanks from Jim Helton. Let's begin:

**\* Collect Prayer (please rise in body or spirit) Pastor, Slide 4**

Gracious God, when the world's political noise is turned up high, we come not to escape, but to seek wisdom, and to focus on things that are worthy. Dial down the distractions in our minds. Tune our senses to your word and our hearts to your praise. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

**Tech Note: Spotlight Liturgist.**

**\* Opening Hymn "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling", UMH 384 Slides 5-9**

**L: Please remain standing and refer to the bulletin insert for this morning's Call to Worship from Psalm 106.**

**Tech Note: Unmute Liturgist, Mute Pastor**

**\* Call to Worship: Psalm 106, Insert Liturgist, Slide 10**

Liturgist: <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

**All: O give thanks to the LORD, who is good; whose steadfast love endures forever.**

Liturgist: <sup>2</sup> Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD, or show forth all God's praise?

**All: <sup>3</sup> Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.**

Liturgist: <sup>4</sup> Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you deliver them,

**All: <sup>5</sup> that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory with your heritage.**

Liturgist: <sup>6</sup> Both we and our forebears have sinned; we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

**All: <sup>19</sup> They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a molten image.**

Liturgist: <sup>20</sup> They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.

**All: <sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,**

Liturgist: <sup>22</sup> wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea.

**All: <sup>23</sup> Therefore the Lord intended to destroy them had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach, to turn away God's wrath from destroying them.**

**\* Gloria Patri: Pianist, Slide 11**

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.

*L: Please be seated and turn to page 395 of your hymnal for our Hymn of Praise*

**Hymn of Praise**                      **“Take Time to be Holy”, UMH 395**                      **Slides 12-13**

**Tech Note: Spotlight “Congregation”, Mute Liturgist, Unmute Pastor**

**Pastoral Reading**                      **Exodus 32:1-14**                      **Pastor/Liturgist, Slide 14**

Liturgist: This morning we'll read Exodus 32:1-14, in which the Israelites sin against the Lord. We'll read from the NRSV.

**Pastor: When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”**

Liturgist: <sup>2</sup> Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.”

**Pastor: <sup>3</sup> So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. <sup>4</sup> He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”**

Liturgist: <sup>5</sup> When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.”

**Pastor: <sup>6</sup> They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.**

Liturgist: <sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; <sup>8</sup> they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’”

**Pastor: <sup>9</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. <sup>10</sup> Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”**



**Moment of Insight      “The Banquet” Matthew 22:1-14      Pastor, Slide 18**

Now, I don't know about you, but I can't imagine not showing up for a king's wedding banquet. That would have to be one swanky party – one I would not normally be invited to, so an invite would be an unexpected surprise!

This morning's Moment of Insight focuses on the parable Jesus told about one such party. The king invites all to come to his feast, and they don't show up. He sends out servants to extend the invitation once again – “hey, everything is ready, we've even got a great DJ for after the dinner!!!” And instead of responding, they go so far as to mistreat and kill the king's servants. Can you imagine the king's disappointment, anger and frustration?

Finally, he says, forget about all those folks who should be here, they're not worthy – go out and bring in everyone you can find, no matter who they are. And they do, and a good time is had by all. Well, except for that one guy – the one who showed up without a wedding robe – his day didn't end so well.

Jesus told this story after entering Jerusalem for the last time, which means that we are tip-toeing up to the line of Easter, but we won't cross it. This story was one of three Jesus told, more or less against the Pharisees, and they quite likely led to his death, so they are pretty important stories. What lesson does this one bring?

Well, it seems to me that the first invitation was to the Israelites that God had entered a covenant relationship with – it was a troubled relationship as the First Testament informs. The second invitation would be the one extended through generations of prophets, many of whom were killed. This may also include the death of John the Baptist, and may foretell Jesus' death as well. The final invite opens the doors to all! Here it is important to remember that much of Jesus' ministry was focused on the Jewish people, but this was changing – doors were opening.

Great – God as extended the invitation to all, so what's the deal with that one guy? Well, Colossians 3:14 says, “Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.” I guess he chose not to. And that is the point of the story – receiving God's grace and mercy, God's salvation, is a matter of choice – our choice. And as simple as the choice should be, not everyone will make it. Perhaps we should help people understand what they're missing out on. Amen? Amen.

**Tech Note: Spotlight Liturgist's Video, Unmute Liturgist, Mute Pastor.**

L: This morning I read from:

**Scripture Reading**

**Philippians 4:1-9**

**Slide 19**

L: In which Paul closes his letter to the church in Philippi. I'll read from the NRSV:

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

<sup>2</sup> I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. <sup>9</sup> Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.”

Liturgist: The word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Tech Note: Spotlight Pastor's Video, Unmute Pastor, Mute Liturgist.**

**Pastor: Stop Screen Share, Switch to local mic.**

**Message:**

**“Whatever”**

**Pastor, Slide 19**

Please join me in prayer: Lord God, Pour out your Spirit on the words I am about to share, make them your own, find them pleasing, I pray, that they may nourish Your people, O LORD, our rock and our redeemer. Amen

**Page 1 – The Issue Today/Intro Story:**

If ever there is a word that I dislike, it is the word “whatever.” I dislike the word so much that I struggled to actually use it as the title of this week’s message.

Not only because I dislike it, but because I was afraid that you might have the same reaction to it that I do. I mean, if ever there were a less helpful, more non-committal word than “whatever,” I’m not sure what it is. Not only that, one of my kids, and I’m not going to spill the beans as to who it is, was a master of the use of the word: Whatever.

What do you want for dinner? I don’t know, whatever. What would you like to do for your birthday? I don’t know, whatever. Christmas? Whatever. A boot to the head? Well, you get it: whatever. I mean really, if I didn’t want your opinion, would I have asked? If I had a clear picture in my mind, would I have consulted you? Whatever. And then the phrase really took off with that Valley Girl set, several years back – not only using the word, but adding that voice and emphasis that may never leave my mind: whatever...

And then we run into that word in today’s scripture reading – the closing lines to Paul’s letter to the Philippians. As you may recall, Paul is writing this letter with joy in his heart, despite being locked in prison while he is writing it. He has so much to say, but I imagine he was reaching the end of the single sheet of paper, or papyrus, (issued to him by the warden, of course) that by the time he got to the end of the letter he just had to cram it all in. We hear his desires to be with them, offering words to help resolve a squabble, and issuing a few final instructions. That’s where we encounter that word. Whatever.

Now, I may not get it exactly right, but I’ll never forget this verse – verse 8 to be exact, “Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” I won’t forget it because *my* last pastor used to do a monthly memory verse that we would recite each Sunday to learn it. Sometimes we even sang a song that he made up, in an attempt to learn the verse. Usually it was something fairly short and simple – easy to remember - until this verse came up. Imagine trying to remember this verse correctly! But it worked: while I may not be able to recite it word for word, I will always remember the gist, and fortunately Paul was using the word as meaning all-encompassing, not non-committal. There may be hope for this word after all.

## Page 2 - Exploring the Text/Context:

OK, so now that we've got that out of the way, we can go a different direction all together. So, while this ending bit of the letter seems to be a hodgepodge of final thoughts, it *is possible* that Paul is trying to make a point. Remember how we said that Paul was writing with Joy in his heart, despite being in prison? What if Paul is trying to define joy as he closes his letter? What if this is a recipe for joy? Maybe this is why it feels disjointed, but it comes together to produce something whole, and satisfying, and delicious, to boot!<sup>1</sup>

Joy, says Paul, is revealed in gentleness, in how we treat those around us, in how we respond to slights against us, and in how we reach out to those who are hurt. "*Let your gentleness be known to everyone*" (4:5) says Paul. Let it show. Joy is found in the knowledge and experience of the nearness of God (*The Lord is near*), a nearness that diminishes anxiety and brings out a willingness to connect with God with gratitude and with hope (*in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God*). Joy is found in that communion, that peaceful confidence that comes from living in Christ.

But then, it gets sticky. Paul throws in a messy word. "Always." Darn, Paul. Why'd you have to throw that word in there? That unreachable, impossible word? That *always* word. Take out that word, and this is a nice little passage about being happy, about finding your joy, about walking on the sunny side of life. But, no Paul, you weren't happy with that. You wanted something more, something deeper. You wanted something (dare we say it?) . . . eternal. Always.

Cover one eye and read this without that scary word. Just for a moment. "Rejoice in the Lord." Well, of course! Who would say no to that? Again, I say rejoice. Sure, keep reminding us; we need the boost. We also need to be reminded of the source of this joy - rejoice in the Lord. Certainly, we can do that. We have done that. We can remember a time when there was joy in the Lord, in worship, in fellowship, at a wedding or a baptism. Sure, it happens. Been there, done that.

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<sup>1</sup> The following has been adapted from: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/pressing-on/nineteenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-lectionary-planning-notes/nineteenth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-preaching-notes>

And then, Paul says, let it spill out. That joy in the Lord is not just for you. It is not just so that you get a boost, a lift, a skip in your step. Let it come out. “Let your gentleness be known to everyone.” Gentleness?

Hmmm, that may not be the best word, actually. A good word, but not the best. It doesn't quite convey what Paul is getting at here. Patience, some say; forbearance, if anyone uses that word anymore; magnanimity, if you want a real tongue twister.

### **Page 3 - The Text Today/Exegesis:**

Eugene Peterson's *The Message* says, “Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you're on their side, working with them and not against them.”<sup>2</sup> That's good. Another paraphrase said “Let all the world know that you'll meet them half-way.” It's about hospitality, about welcome, about inclusion, about the fact that we aren't the judge; we don't point fingers; we don't accuse, we dropped our stones long ago, ever since Jesus told us that only the sinless can throw them. We aren't looking to pick fights, to call names. What we have to share is joy. Joy in the Lord. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. Everyone? Paul almost slipped in an always there, didn't he? Everyone. Hmmm.

Don't worry about anything. Yeah, OK, thanks Paul. But no thanks. How in the world are we supposed to do that? It's one thing to know we aren't supposed to worry, but how do we stop? And then because we can't stop, we end up worrying about worrying. Anyone experiencing anxiety knows how that cycle works!

I guess that's why there is a comma there and not a period. “Do not worry about anything (comma) but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (4:6). Don't worry, says Paul, but get on your knees. Don't worry, but pour it out. Don't worry, but beg and plead and pound on the doorways of heaven with both fists, even as you know – not hope, not assume, but *know* – that you are heard and that answers are already all around you when you open your eyes and put one foot in front of the other again. Don't worry because you don't have time to worry; you are so busy bending God's divine ear. Don't worry because your *life* is now a prayer, and the answers are coming quickly and sometimes in surprising ways.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Message](#) (MSG) Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by [Eugene H. Peterson](#)

Don't worry because from somewhere comes this sense that maybe, just maybe, you are not alone in the universe. This sense that maybe you do have a place, a home, an identity, an existence right here and right now that is meaningful, useful, transformed and transforming. From somewhere, who knows where, God, it must be, comes a peace that even on your best days you can't define or even describe. It just *is*, passing all understanding, or *our* understanding anyway.

For now, though, choose joy. Rejoice in the Lord. Always. We've come back to that. It is still there. We can only squint it away for so long. We can only ignore it for a time. Rejoice in the Lord, Always. Maybe we could negotiate with Paul. Rejoice in the Lord, when it is convenient. Rejoice in the Lord when we've got the time. When we're in the mood; when the world hasn't taken yet another sideswipe at our confidence – another poke at our sensibilities. Rejoice in the Lord when we've run out of excuses not to. Rejoice in the Lord . . . Always. Always?

#### **Page 4 - The Good News/Summary/Takeaways:**

How in the world do we do that? Focus on the next verse? No, focus more deeply on this one. "Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (4:8). Think on, dwell on, meditate on, take your cue from, be obsessed with these things. Look at the list: True, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent, praiseworthy. What is that? Who is that?

Implied in this directive is the confidence that there is enough of this out there in the world to fill us up. And not only fill us up but give us joy. Real joy; in the Lord, joy. Always joy. Paul says go find Christ in the world. Go find the one you love, the one who loves you; focus on that, and you will know joy. Think about these things, Paul writes, live in these things; fill yourself up with these things.

Then, he says, live in community, that's where we find joy. It is a corporate experience, not an individual one. Find someone who can show you faith at work, someone who walks the walk. (*Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. 4:9*) Better still, be that person for someone!

Joy is found when we engage in acts of kindness, when we give, serve, love. It is present when we are content where we are; when we bloom where we are planted rather than getting caught in a loop of always wishing things were different.

And finally, joy is found when we take risks. Step out in faith, knowing that as long as you walk with God, you cannot fail. (Read on a few verses, you'll find those words - *4:15 reads: I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*)

Joy, then, is dynamic, the result of an ongoing relationship, and a way of living, that keeps us engaged with God and with others. It leaks out as we engage with others; it shapes our language and our vision. In short, it shows. In everything we do, in who we are, in the attitudes we present, in the face we offer to the world, **joy** shows.

To borrow a phrase from last week, think on these things as you **press on** through life. Think of these joy things, these **always** things. Think in gentleness and confidence and prayer. Meditate on these things, whatever you might face. It's the only way to be strong enough to press on, whatever. Amen.

**At the conclusion of the message:**

**Liturgist:** As you listen to this morning's offertory reflect on the worshipful act of giving back to our Lord. Think about what you have received as blessings, and how you can bless others in return. Amen

**Pastor: Start Screen Share, Switch to Yeti Mic.**

**Stewardship Moment:** Please continue to support our mission by mailing your tithes and offerings to the church (PO Box 375, Blue Mound, IL 62513). Thank you.

**Offertory**

**Slide 20**

**Doxology/Offertory Prayer:**

**Slide 21**

Mighty God, deserving of all honor and praise: we bring our gifts this morning, remembering that the offering you truly seek is the offering of our whole lives. Help us, we pray, to live a life that is worthy in your sight. When we struggle and stumble, help us up and put us on the path. On the advice of the apostle Paul, may our lives be focused on "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable" (4:8), so that our offering may be pleasing in your eyes. In Christ, we pray. Amen. (Philippians 4:1-9)

**Joys and Concerns:**

**Slide 22**

(Please forward joys and concerns to Pastor via Zoom Chat function, by phone at 692-2543, or at [kdkriesel@gmail.com](mailto:kdkriesel@gmail.com).)

**Prayer Hymn:** "Sweet Hour of Prayer" v1, UMH 496

**Slide 23-24**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Slide 25**

Gracious God, give us humble, teachable and obedient hearts, that we may receive what you have revealed, and do what you have commanded. Since we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth, make us hunger for this heavenly food, that it may nourish us today in the ways of eternal life.

God of Aaron and Moses, you stayed the hand of your wrath when we fell into idolatry and discord; and when we forgot our deliverance, your love for us remained unchanging. Transform us and our world into a place of justice, love and peace. Fill our leaders with a hunger for your wisdom and guide them in your ways.

Creator God, you call us to love and serve you with body, mind and spirit. Sometimes we forget. Sometimes we see our sisters and brothers in need, and we say, "Whatever." Awaken us to their needs, remembering that your desire is for whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, and pleasing. Open our hearts in compassion and receive these prayers on behalf of the needs of the church and the world, as with joy we lift up: \_\_\_\_\_ and with concern: \_\_\_\_\_,

**Joys:** Time with Family and Friends

**Concerns:** Brian Damery (Heart Issues), Dorothy Kriesel (Surgery, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>), Katie (surgery)

**Continuing:** John Holmgren (Heart Issues), Sue Younker (Improving); Leona O'Dear (Anita's daughter, post-COVID issues), Christen McCloud; Western State Fire Victims; Tropical Storm/Hurricane Victims, Dorothy Damery (Health), Rose Damery (New Knee); Maurine Severns (Eyes), Justice in our nation; All affected by COVID 19; Carol Acree, Diane Elder, Doris Bonn, Tom Vaughn, Vic Oxby, Don Younker, Bob Perona, Our Government, Local, State, and National Leaders; First Responders, Members of the Military, Our Bishop (Frank Beard), Our District Superintendent (Brad Watkins), The United Methodist Church.

**Those Unable to Join us in Worship:** Dorothy Damery (Primrose), Doris Bonn (At Home), Martha Sheppard (Imboden Creek Gardens), Gene Grandfield (At Home), Eleanor Moma (At Home).

**Notes:** Please submit your prayer requests on the tear offs, by chat, text, or email to ensure accuracy.

And now that we have proclaimed our joys and concerns let us take to the Lord those things, which we wish to keep between God and ourselves in a time of silent prayer.

**(Silent Prayer)**

Holy One, hear our prayers as we strive to remain faithful in all things; setting the paths of our lives according to the teachings and the life of Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray:

**LORD'S PRAYER:**

**Slide 25**

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**\*Hymn of Commitment "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", UMH 526 Slide 26-28**

**Benediction - Closing Hymn - Postlude - Community Time**

**Slide 29**