

From the Pastor's Desk



Saturday, July 18, 2020

Midsummer Blessings

*I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!"
Our feet are standing within your gates,
O Jerusalem.*

Psalm 122:1-2

For the protection of everyone in our community and beyond, **we are planning to continue with online worship after the concluding service of the Summer Worship Series on August 9.** At least through August, our Sunday services will be provided in the general format in which they appeared in March, April and May. If you are receiving this newsletter, you are signed up to receive the Montreat Presbyterian Church worship services when they resume on August 16--and it is a continuing joy to live our church life together with you!

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This Sunday (July 19), the service should be accessible at 10:30 A.M. or any time thereafter. Chris Currie is our guest preacher this week. As I am in the exact middle of two weeks of quarantine, I'll be off camera again this Sunday, happily worshipping from home and grateful for our partners at the Montreat Conference Center. Links are provided below for

- Church Chat at 9:30 A.M.
- The Summer Worship Series service at 10:30 A.M.
- Hymn Sing at 7:00 P.M.

FOR THIS SUNDAY, JULY 19:

9:30 A.M. Church Chat

[Click here to join friends before the service for Church Chat,](#)

an online Zoom opportunity to see friends and check in before worship. Drop in and leave as you feel comfortable. A convener will simply make sure that everyone who wants to check in and catch up can do so. Feel free to join even if you think you want to be a silent participant. Everyone is welcome!

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10:30 A.M. Worship:

For this week's service, please go directly to the Montreat Conference Center [Worship page](#) and find the link for this week's service there.

(Look for a box that will have the words "Join Sunday's Service Here," and click on that box.)

The **bulletin** can also be downloaded from the Conference Center's Worship page (<https://montreat.org/events/summer-worship-2020>).

(Look for a box that will have the words "Download an Order of Worship" and click on that box. Please note: the bulletin is sometimes not updated until the morning of the service.)

Last Sunday's service (July 12) can be seen in its entirety [here](#).

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7:00 P.M. Montreat Hymn Sing

The summer hymn sings are held "in real time"
and you can **use [this link to join](#)**.

For a PDF to accompany the evening's programming, **[click here](#)**.

Kat Achtemeier offered this prayer at the end of last Sunday's Church Chat and I immediately asked her if I could share it this week. Many thanks, Kat.

K.G.

Gracious God, who searches the hearts of all people and knows all our thoughts, "create in each of us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us."

In these days when frustrations grow from separations and social distancing, when even smiles are hard to see and loneliness looms large, grant us grace to seek to understand how you are at work in us even in the midst of these conditions.

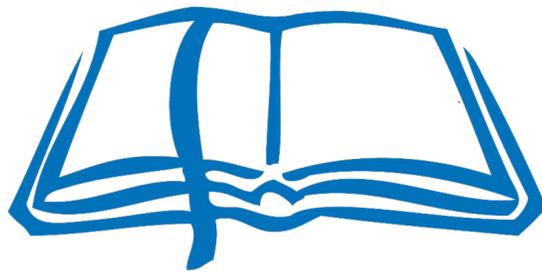
In this time of exile, as you did for your people of old, transform us.

Help us to yield ourselves to your will so that we may not simply *get through* these days, but so that we may *live* in the midst of these challenging days--always as clay in the hands of the potter. Indeed, "Spirit of the living God: melt us, mold us, fill us, use us. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us."

We pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Kat Achtemeier
July 12, 2020

Closing lyric adapted from Daniel Iverson, "Spirit of the Living God," Text (c) 1935 Birdwing Music (admin. EMICMG Publishing.com).



*"For God so loved the world
that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him
may not perish
but may have eternal life."*

John 3:16

*What then are we to say about these things?
If God is for us, who is against us?
He who did not withhold his own Son,
but gave him up for all of us,
will he not with him also give us everything else?*

*Who will bring any charge against God's elect?
It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?
It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised,
who is at the right hand of God,
who indeed intercedes for us.*

*Who will separate us from the love of Christ?
Will hardship, or distress, or persecution,
or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
As it is written,
"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors
through him who loved us.*

*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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