



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

E-Link

August 12, 2021

Worship  
Join us weekly on  
our website:  
[Firstprescf.org](http://Firstprescf.org)

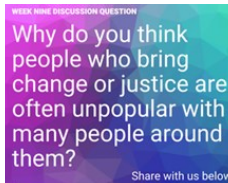
This Weekend's Worship

Sermon: "For the Sake of Justice"

Scripture: Matthew 5:10

Ways to join worship: In-person, Facebook Live at 10:00am on Sunday, by recording posted on our website Monday.

Question of the Week: Why do you think people who bring change or justice are often unpopular with many people around them? Go to our [Facebook page](#) and share your answer with us.



Prayer of Preparation

Dear Jesus,  
With you before us, beside us, and within us, we can face anything. Please give us courage and strength to keep following you, even when others don't understand or harm us.  
We pray for all your children, including those who persecute people for following your way. Amen.



The Beatitudes – Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' [justice] sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

This Sunday we will sit with Jesus atop the mountain reflecting on what it means in Matthew when he says, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' (*dikaioyne*) sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (NRSV)." Or, as Margaret Aymer Oget translates it, "Greatly honored are those who have been persecuted for the sake of justice." I doubt many of us would classify ourselves as belonging to the persecuted. Does that mean we haven't pursued justice or righteousness? This is not the first time in the beatitudes where we have encountered the Greek word, *dikaioyne* (di-ky-oh-SOON-ay). In the fourth beatitude Jesus taught us that those who are famished and parched for *dikaioyne* should be honored.

Often our Bible translations render this word as "righteousness", but a truer translation is "justice". The difference is not insignificant. Most importantly, "justice" orients our actions beyond the self and toward God and our neighbor. Too often "righteousness" is understood as how well one follows the rules or how disciplined one is. This understanding centers the self and not God or our neighbor. It leads to whole crowds of indi-

viduals turning inward to find worthiness or validation. Then, once jostled enough to lift eyes to see the incredible disparity in the world, they wonder how such injustice came to be so. In our current day I think of how slowly we are lifting our eyes to see power systems enforcing poverty, racism, and ecological destruction.

As Jesus addresses his disciples, he is reminding them that God's topsy-turvy kin-dom is not focused on how individuals can earn rewards in (or access to) heaven. Rather, it is focused on bringing love and justice on earth for those who have been marginalized and dismissed. To do justice is to boldly confront powerful inequities even to point of one's own peril. Jesus would soon demonstrate this himself even to the point of his unjust death on a cross for challenging the ways of the powerful in Rome.

Who can you think of who characterizes the call to seek justice without regard for self? If we sit and listen to them, what might we be called to do? What parts of our systems would we be called to challenge? I look forward to exploring these questions with you.

Your fellow mountain climber,

*Pastor Julie*

Church Birthdays

Aug 14-Rhonda Braley,  
21-Noah Tollefson

OFFICE REMINDER:

Please be sure that you are sending emails to the office at: [office@firstprescf.org](mailto:office@firstprescf.org). Your computer's autofill may want to use our old CFU account. That one is *only checked periodically* and your message may not be received in a timely manner.

For your prayers...

Judy Burfeind

Tom Mulligan's cousin,  
Julie Jensen ,

Rob Cline's brother-in-law

Evelyn Boice's sister

Notice...

Sunday, August 15

10:00 am Worship  
10:45 am Social Time on the west lawn.  
3:00-4:00 pm Backpack Blessing for children and youth at Washington Park

## Thanks for serving last week:

**Worship Leader:** Cyd Grafft

**Computer Operator:** Scott Connolly

**Videographer:** Neal Leeper

**Shepherds:** Kevin & Jan Thedens

**Funeral Hospitality:** Jim & Jane Seeley

**Funeral Sound System:** Dave Luck

**Computer Projector Training:** Gary Clark, Dave Luck

**Office Substitute:** Nancy Hoppe

## Presby Spottings

While vacationing in northern Michigan last week, Kirk and Sue Eastman happened to see Abby Hendrickson in Leland, MI.



## Don Erusha Funeral Recording

Last week we held a Service to the Witness of the Resurrection for Don Erusha. Because of Covid 19 restrictions, most of our congregation was unable to attend. If you were unable to attend, you may view a recording of the service by this link: <https://vimeo.com/583975136>. Please continue to keep the family and friends of Don in your prayers.

**Bring your backpack for a special blessing from Pastor Julie!**

**AUGUST 15**  
3:00 - 4:00  
WASHINGTON PARK PLAYGROUND SHELTER



**2021 BACKPACK BLESSING**

Come join us for a backpack blessing, snack, and hang out with your friends.

## Threehouse Donations needed

Our church has been asked to supply pop and lemonade for the ThreeHouse Block Party.

- **name brands** like Pepsi, Coke, Mountain Dew, etc.
- **diet** and **regular** versions
- No 2-liters, just individual size plastic bottles
- Water is already supplied

Please leave bottles in the entryway by Aug. 18.

## This week's schedule (Zoom and on-site)

### Thursday, August 12

2:00 pm Food Bank Work Session

### Sunday, August 15

10:00 am Worship, sanctuary

10:45 am Social Time, west lawn

3:00 pm Backpack Blessing for SHINE kids and families at Washington Park

### Monday, August 16

10:00 am Lectionary, dining room

### Wednesday, August 18

10:00 am Working for Justice: Breaking Bias, Zoom

## WORKING for JUSTICE: BREAKING BIAS

Are you curious about our new group at church and what we are doing? We meet on Zoom and continue to learn more about racial inequalities and systemic poverty in our country and locally.

### REMINDER ABOUT OUR NEXT MEETING:

**Wednesday, August 18 at 10 AM on Zoom**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

We will resume our discussion about the video series "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man", and will discuss episodes 6, 7, 8, and 9, which are linked below.

In preparation for the meeting, please watch these video episodes. The videos are approximately 10-20 minutes in length. We will discuss our reactions to the videos during our Zoom meeting.

Episode 6: <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-6>

Episode 7: <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-7>

Episode 8: <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-8>

Ep. 9: (#8,p 2): <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-9>

If you have not yet watched the first five episodes that were previously discussed and would like to, they are linked below.

[Episode 1 - Uncomfortable Conversations \(uncomfortableconvos.com\)](https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-1)

[Episode 2 - Uncomfortable Conversations \(uncomfortableconvos.com\)](https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-2)

[Episode 3 - Uncomfortable Conversations \(uncomfortableconvos.com\)](https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-3)

[Episode 4 - Uncomfortable Conversations \(uncomfortableconvos.com\)](https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-4)

[Episode 5 - Uncomfortable Conversations \(uncomfortableconvos.com\)](https://uncomfortableconvos.com/episode/episode-5)