



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

E-Link

June 15, 2022

10:00 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



This Weekend's Worship – 10:00 am

Sermon: Liberation is Communal:
When Will We Heal?

Scripture: Luke 8:26-39

Prayer of Preparation

Living God, you call us to yourself so that we may live in wholeness with ourselves and our neighbors. Unchain your people and set us free to rejoice in your saving word. **Amen.**

Liberation is Communal: When Will We Heal?

The story in Luke 8:26-39 is a disturbing one. It begins with Jesus encountering a man who possessed by demons. This man is unhoused, naked, isolated, shackled by the powers that be and living the most unclean of places, among the tombs of the dead. After a lengthy series of pleas from the man (more accurately from the demons who possessed the man) for Jesus to leave him alone. Jesus banished the evil spirits to reside in some nearby pigs who then drown themselves in the lake. Like I said, it's disturbing.

Despite its strangeness to our ears, this story epitomizes the healing and liberation central to Jesus' mission. It also shines an uncomfortable light on our human tendency to fear anything which disturbs our social mores. So much so, that we actively and passively invite the oppression of others to keep the peace (and often the profits) that such oppression provides.

In the narrative of the possessed man the community's fear shows up only *after* the man is healed, welcomed, clothed, unchained, in his right mind, and sitting at Jesus' feet. It is just too much for the Gerasene townspeople; they are terrified and insist that Jesus leave at once. Their system was being challenged and they were afraid. The man had been healed, but the community still suffered from fear.

I can't help but think of the story of Juneteenth (celebrated on June 19 each year). In January of 2021, The Presbyterian Foundation adopted Juneteenth as a holy day of remembrance. The Foundation's trustee board chair, [Rev. Dr. Neal Pre-sa, states](#), "[It] is a sacred day of reckoning for the Church, and we dare say, for our nation, as it brings to attention the delay of more than two and a half years for official word to reach enslaved Blacks in Texas that the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued years prior. The tragedy of that gap in time — of justice delayed was justice denied — calls forth our collective wills that we as Christians and as a people can never rest until the fulness of racial equality and racial equity is realized." I have no doubt that this delay had fear at its root. Fear of social upset and fear of losing the peace and profits enslavement provided its beneficiaries.

This is not just a human practice of the past. What ways do we as humanity still let fear guide our welcome? What (and who) needs healing in order for the liberation of Christ to truly show forth in our communities? The answers might be disturbing, but I hope you will join me in this holy reflection.

Pastor Julie

Church Birthdays

Jun. 16, Sandy Lawry,
Jakob Hagee, 17-
Jeannette Mukaysirie,
19-Gary Clark, 21-Darrel
Flater, 23-Jenny Allen,
24-Noah Connolly

Pentecost Offering

It's not too late to give to the Pentecost Offering.

40% from our church goes to our Soles for Souls clothing project.

Volunteers can sign up anytime online:

Greeter Sign Up:

[Sign Up Genius: Greeters](#)

Worship Leader Sign Up:

[Sign Up Genius: Worship Leaders](#)

Or sign up in the narthex!

Thanks for serving last week:

Worship Leader: Sandy Jensen

Videographer: Brad Jensen

Computer Operator: Rob Cline

Greeters: Jean Boller, Mike Rokes

Lawn Mowing: Steve Moon

(Mowing the week of **6/19** - Brad Jensen)

Congratulations

Tom & Jeverna Mulligan will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 17.

Summer Camp Update:

Due to staffing issues, overnight camps at Lakeshore Center, Okoboji have been canceled. We are working to place our campers at other PCUSA camps. Our kids will still receive the same campership fee support.

Susan Runkle Memorial Service

The memorial service for **Susan Runkle** will begin 10:30 am at the church on Saturday, June 18. Visitation in the narthex is one hour prior. Please wear a mask. A lunch will be served in the dining room.

This week's schedule

Saturday, June 18

10:30 am Susan Runkle Memorial, sanctuary

Sunday, June 19

10:00 am Worship, sanctuary

Monday, June 20

6:30 pm Worship Team, Zoom

Update from Working for Justice: Breaking Bias

After a year and a half of reading, study, and discussion, the members of WFJ:BB have decided that we feel ready to move forward with some type of action. We held a retreat on April 27, 2022, to discern what types of action we feel most able and called to do. On May 11, we finalized our decisions about next steps, which are outlined below.

We decided we want to explore faith community organizing. Though we are taking a break from regular meetings over the summer, we will each work individually to educate ourselves on this topic. We will do this by reading the book *Organizing Church: Grassroots Practices for Embodying Change in Your Congregation, Your Community, and Our World* by Tim Conder & Dan Rhodes as well as engaging church and community members in one-on-one conversations.

We discussed bringing in a speaker about faith community organizing. Pastor Julie agreed to find and schedule someone for either September 7 or 21. We agreed to invite other Cedar Falls churches to join us as we listen and learn from this speaker. The following churches were mentioned as starting points of connection: the Mennonites, Cedar Heights Presbyterian, St. Luke's Episcopal. We agreed to focus just on the community of Cedar Falls for our first action steps and to partner with only Cedar Falls churches for now.

We will resume regular meetings in September and plan to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 10-11 AM, either in-person or by Zoom. Meetings are planned for September 7 and 21, October 5 and 19, November 2 and 16, and December 7 and 21.

New members are always welcome to join our meetings and we also encourage congregation members to join us in reading the book mentioned above.

Personal Hygiene Kits Drive

Community Ministries is collecting personal hygiene products for Eye of the Needle. Products requested are:

bar soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and deodorant
(only those items, please.)

Donations can be left in the marked baskets inside the north entrance from now through July 17.

We will pack donated items into hygiene kits following worship on July 24. These kits will be given to students and families along with school uniforms and shoes as part of Eye of the Needle's school uniform drive.

