

Date January 24, 2021

Theme God calls, we listen

God's People Gather

Prelude

Prelude Pondering

I said: "Let me walk in the fields." He said: "No, walk in the town."

I said: "There are no flowers there." He said: "No flowers, but a crown."

I pleaded for time to be given. He said: "Is it hard to decide?"

It will not seem so hard in heaven to have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the fields, then set my face to the town;

He said, "My child, do you yield? Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine; and into my heart came He;

And I walk in a light divine, the path I had feared to see.

Excerpt from "Obedience" by George MacDonald (1824-1905)

Call to Worship

Leader: We come to praise the God of all Creation.

People: We come to worship the One who calls us.

Leader: We come to listen for God's word to us.

People: We come to hear Jesus offering us an unexpected invitation.

Leader: Rejoice, for God is near, and God is speaking to each of us.

All: Let us worship God!

Opening Song

Make Me A Servant

Make me a servant,

humble and meek,

Lord let me lift up

those who are weak.

And may the prayer

of my heart always be:

Make me a servant,

make me a servant,

make me a servant today.

Call to Confession

We believe that each one of us is called by God, but sometimes we act as if the call didn't get through to us. We resist the request to serve; we don't return the call or answer the message. But God is persistent and God's grace is insistent. No matter what

we do, God's love and mercy are with us. Because we trust this, we can confess our sins before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, when we hear the stories of God's call to people, we are glad that it was them and not us. We know what our lives are like – how could we possibly change our life patterns to such an extent? We have school, work, family, and bills to pay. It is so unrealistic of you to ask us to be like the disciples and follow wherever you lead. Forgive us, God! Help us to see that your persistent love surrounds us whoever we are, even as your persistent voice calls us to serve wherever we are. Show us how to turn toward those in need, to reach out from wherever we are in love for a hurting world. Teach us how to serve and lead others in following you. We pray in the name of the one who calls disciples, your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, there is good news for you today. God is with you! God knows and loves you. Know that in Jesus Christ, God's grace has redeemed you, and God is always leading and calling you to a place of joy and hope.

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

Sharing the Peace of Christ

Response

Peace Song

Peace I leave with you my friends
Shalom my peace in all you do
Peace I leave with you my friends
I give to you so you can give to others too.

God's Word is Proclaimed

Children's Time

Scripture Reading Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Mark 1:14-20

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you."

So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now

Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea--for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people."

And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Sermon

Responding to God's Word

Offering

If you are able, please continue to send in your offering and pledge. If you are enrolled in electronic funds transfer, there is no need to do anything different. If you would like to give online using Paypal, click this link: bit.ly/FPCsterling

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we know that you have called us to love the world and serve you. So we bring these gifts, our offerings and your tithes, in love and service. Receive them and use them to call others near to you. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

God's People are Sent

Closing Song

Show Me Your Ways
Show me Your ways

That I may walk with You,
Show me Your ways,
I put my hope in You.

The cry of my heart
is to love You more,
To live with the
touch of Your hand,
Stronger each day,
Show me Your ways.

Show me Your ways
That I may walk with You,
Show me Your ways,
I put my hope in You.

The cry of my heart
is to love You more,
To live with the
touch of Your hand,
Stronger each day,
Show me Your ways.
Show me Your ways.
Show me Your ways.

Benediction

Leader:....and let all God's people say...

People: Alleluia! Amen!