

## WORSHIP for September 6, 2020

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) To watch sermons recorded on Zoom on our YouTube Channel, go to the FPCP website: <https://www.fpcpataskala.com/> and click on WORSHIP or follow us on Facebook from the homepage.
- 2) Please invite family or friends, who want to join us for live worship on Sundays @10:45am, to request access by emailing their name, email, & phone number to [janetann386@gmail.com](mailto:janetann386@gmail.com)
- 3) If you need a COVID-19 cloth mask call 740-901-1232 for the Johnsons, who lead the CRT. Thank you to Gage Marcum and Katie Slaymaker, who have been making masks available.

*Prelude played by Megan Ladd, "Praise to the Lord" Streaming CCLI 20373701; Author: Joachim Meander; Arranged by: Philip Keveren; © Copyright by Hall Leonard Corporation. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcLzhsmImG8>

**Call to Worship:** Psalm 149:1-5 *Responsively*

***Sing to the Lord a new song,***

**his praise in the assembly of his faithful people.**

***Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King.***

**Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp.**

***For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.***

**Let the faithful people rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds.**

Opening Hymn: "Sing Praise to God"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEGQnIHHC\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEGQnIHHC_k)

**Prayer of Confession:** *Unison*

**Forgive us, Lord, when we delight more in our own achievements, rather than in your plans and victories. Forgive us when we are too self conscious to dance and sing, rather than being fully focused on you and your glory. Forgive our pride and fears of failure. Amen.**

*(Pause for a time of silent confession.)*

**Assurance of Forgiveness:** *Responsively*

*Christ humbled himself to the point of death to carry out the will of the Father and to take our sin upon him at the cross. We believe the good news of the gospel.*

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

"The Gloria Patri"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgcYD\\_m4OhU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgcYD_m4OhU)

## Hymn of Preparation: "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsBpM9IcBts>

**Call to God's Word:** *Unison*

**"Scripture cannot be set aside... What does Scripture say?"** John 10:35 & Romans 4:3.

**Prayer for Illumination:** *Unison*

**Lord, through your Spirit enable us to consider your Word, and to enact it in our lives to bring you glory and praise. Amen.**

**Gospel Reading: Matthew 18:1-5; 20:17-28 (NIV)**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+18%3A1-20%3A28&version=NIV>

**SERMON: "Greatest in the Kingdom"** by *The Reverend Dr. Janet Hufford*

Watch sermon on: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAdy2hvW6PL93B6hbgswTxf93Evs575yd>

To summarize Jesus' ministry on earth, he has been preaching and teaching about the kingdom of heaven, healing to show signs of the kingdom, calling people into the kingdom, telling parables about what the kingdom of heaven is like, & stressing faith to come into the kingdom. Jesus has shown himself as the Messiah and the Son of the Living God over the kingdom in his transfiguration, and trained up his disciples to carry on his kingdom work upon his twice mentioned coming death and resurrection. Yet, the disciples, who like us are often slow to see the point, come to Jesus with a question far off the mark, asking who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 18:1-5.

In a topsy turvy parabolic style, the question about greatness is answered with the need to take a lowly position of a minor aged child. Contrary to our thinking, greatness requires, not seeking to elevate oneself, but to humble oneself.

Then after Jesus mentions his coming death for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, in Matthew 20:20-28 the mother of James & John, who apparently didn't get the memo from Matthew 18:1-5, asks that her sons be granted the high positions in the kingdom of reigning at the right & left hands of Jesus. Just as Jesus previously and parabolically illustrated the requirement of greatness in the kingdom with children, he does so now by insisting that the great must be servants, just as Jesus in willingly giving up his life. Today's passages clearly convey to the disciples and to us the necessary position we must take in order to enter the kingdom, not positions of self-aggrandizement, but of humility, like children and servants, and even like the tiny mustard seed that we heard of last week.

With these passages as our backdrop, please hear the following. One weekend each October, I went on retreat to a free Christian film festival in Pittsburgh, to watch and listen to what message God might have for me personally and for ministry as a local pastor. 10/16/10, on my way to the film festival, I heard a radio interview with one contemporary disciple who may have taken Jesus' messages in today's passages to heart. Phil Vischer was the successful CEO of a Christian company, Big Idea Productions, makers of Veggie Tales for kids. We've all heard of these, right? My kids grew up with Veggie Tales. Many churches used them for CE. Here, too, I have heard. But in 2003 Big Idea Productions filed for bankruptcy. Now Phil runs a

new production studio, called “Jellyfish Labs.” Seems like a far fall from Big Idea Productions to Jellyfish Labs, doesn’t it? In his experience of bankruptcy, Phil was humbled. Even more humbling perhaps than becoming like a child or servant, Phil was directed by God to become like a jellyfish. Phil was stunned, jellyfish pun intended, knowing that being called a jellyfish is not considered a complement! But Phil said God seemed to say something like, “Hey, what’s the big idea of barreling through the ocean like a big ole’ barracuda eating everything in your path, Phil? You need to become a jellyfish, relying on being filled and led by my Holy Spirit, not by your own power and ideas.” Thus, came the vision for Jellyfish Labs. In 2009 came a 13 DVD series of “What’s in the Bible?” leading children from Genesis to Revelation, now being considered by FPCP. In 2019 Phil began work to reviving Veggie Tales, but all under the guidance of God.

The evening of Phil’s radio interview, I went to worship at a church not far from the film festival. Amazingly, the title of the sermon was “Spirit filled and led.” Thus, Phil’s call to become Spirit filled and Spirit led, like a jellyfish, became a call in my life, too, exemplifying Jesus’s call to become like a child and servant, surrendered too and led by God.

At the end of July, our Wednesday night class heard a similar invitation, to surrender more to Jesus & to be filled & led by the Holy Spirit. A number of the students prayed to answer the call. One was given a song to sing. Others words to pray out loud and encouragement to give to friends.

We may hesitate to step into ministry experiences, when we rely on our own strength and abilities, rather than relying on the filling and leading of the Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus, in will with the Father. After all, young children should not cross the street without holding on to the hand of an adult. Neither can a slave cross without the permission of their owner. So whether we admit it or not, we are fully reliant upon God. Acknowledging such enables us to serve Jesus and to please the Father. Once I was asked last minute to participate in a task at big conference event, but I was hesitant and afraid, feeling that I wasn’t able. I shared my reservations with one of the teachers there. They looked me in the eye and said, “You are right. You cannot do it.” Then kept looking me in the eye with a smile on their face. Peace overcame me, when I realized that my fulfilling the task for the kingdom had nothing to do with me, but with God all things are possible. Humbled, I agree, and God enabled!

Sometimes we suffer the issue of the disciples and Phil, in pride wanting to get ahead. Other times we suffer the issue of thinking we cannot do what God asks, because of the pride of not wanting to be seen as failing. Kingdom work though is not about us. Working for the kingdom is about God. Only God is great in the kingdom. In his great love, the Father has sent his Son to serve and to give his love. So if Jesus, Son of the Living God, humbles himself to serve and glorify the Father, showing the Father’s great love for us, should we not do the same? Let us humble ourselves so that the greatness of God is demonstrated all the more. Amen.

**Hymn of Response: “How Great Thou Art”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cc0QVWzCv9k>

## **PRAYERS OF JOYS & CONCERNS, FOLLOWED BY THE LORD'S PRAYER: *Unison***

Send requests to Pastor Janet's email [janetann386@gmail.com](mailto:janetann386@gmail.com) or call or text 412-877-8310.

### **PRAYERS OF JOY for:**

- Those celebrating **birthdays and anniversaries**.  
(Look in back of church directory to send cards and to extend blessings and prayers.)

### **PRAYERS OF CONCERNS for:**

- **Revival** to enable the Church to fulfill our call of witness. Renewed devotion to **prayer**.
- Prayers for those in the midst of **grief**: Hammock/Gieseck and Mauger families
- Those dealing with **cancer**: Laura Keesor (part-time organist) aggressive weekly chemo, Lisa Johnson (Laura M.'s friends) in treatment & her mother in hospice, Gene L. (Celler O's friend) leukemia chemo, Diana Mock's targeted treatment, Debbie Peters (Jean J.'s sister) recovery from surgery to start treatment, Mae R. (Melissa's aunt) hospice care for stage 4 cancer, Bill Swift (Nancy L.'s brother), & Joyce White (Melissa H.'s aunt) treatment for rare cancer
- Prayers for a cure for and vaccine against **COVID-19**. For those vulnerable at high risk. For those awaiting test results. For those recovering. For loss of loved ones. For workers in medicine, food service, & delivery. For safety and self-sacrifice.
- **Leaders** in all levels of government, health, education, businesses and the Church, for wisdom and discernment during this period pandemic, unrest and for all times.
- Prayers against prejudice and violence, and for protection of those who protect others:
  - **1<sup>st</sup> responders**: police officers, EMTs, and firefighters.
  - **Military**: **John Peter** (Edith Smith's grandson in coast guard), CPO **John Vincent**, **Peter Witt** (Kuwait).
- **Homebound**: Victor & Connie DeRose, Claudia Johnston, Joan Mauger, Pat Morrison, and Anne Nixon
- **Linda G.** (friend of Celler), a cancer survivor, having surgery on 8/17.
- **Frank Gieseck** testing & therapy and clarity & healing, from silent stroke.
- **Jean Johnson** for 10/27 disability hearing
- **Jerika** (Fran's granddaughter in California) full recovery with no nerve damage from black widow bite
- **Diane Kristoff** for recovery at home from fractures
- The people of **China** and brothers & sisters in Christ, who suffer persecution there.

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Please Continue to Give in Dedication to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus**

**Prayer Of Dedication: Unison**

God, in view of your mercy help us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to you, O God. Amen. *Romans 12:1*

**Doxology**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqpXWF15avU>

**Closing Hymn: "Ye Servants of God"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvnlQ15og3M>

**Benediction: Responsively**

As your children and servants, we carry the Good News of the kingdom and your great work and love into the world, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**TABLE TALK**

*And he said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

*Matthew 18:3*

Have you ever received the gift of God bringing humility to you?