

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) For **11am in the sanctuary**, please enter thru the lower red doors in front of the elevator 10:45-11am, wearing a mask. Temperatures will be taken. No reservations are needed at this time.
- 2) **1pm is time of Zoom worship**, until live streaming is available from the sanctuary. Please pray this is able to be installed soon!
- 3) **Communion 5/2** in sanctuary and on Zoom.
- 4) **24 Hour Bible Reading** to start 5/5 at 5pm in downtown Pataskala is a to prepare for...
- 5) **National Day of Prayer** on 5/6 from 7-8:30 organized by Pataskala Area Churches at the Pataskala Nazarene Church. The event is also available online. RSVP to participate in-person or online at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/343485597027072/>
- 6) 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.

WORSHIP for April 24, 2021 – 4th Sunday of Easter

Prelude played & sung by Brent Miller, “At the Cross”

Streaming CCLI 20373701; © 2014 ThankYou PRS; Published under license from EMI Christian Group; Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jonas Myrin, Matt Redman and Matthew Armstrong. MOV.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRcQ8DI2Stc&list=PLAdy2hvW6PL8_1itXDbTRrCeI331DmVVU&index=1

Call to Worship: Psalm 85:7, 9-11 *Responsively*

Show us your unfailing love, Lord, and grant us your salvation.

Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Opening Hymn: “All the Way my Savior Leads Me”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BE0tFEsOJos>

Prayer of Confession: Colossians 3:5-10

(Responsively, pausing in silent reflection between each confession.)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to [our] earthly nature:

sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. [We] used to walk in these ways, in the life [we] once lived. But now [we] must rid [our]selves of all such things, as these:

Anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from [our] lips.

Do not lie to each other, since [we] have taken off [our] old self with its practices and have put on the new self,

Which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe [our]selves with

Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of [us] has a grievance against someone.

Forgive as the Lord forgave [us].

And over all these virtues put on love

Which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Assurance of Forgiveness: Colossians 1:22-23 *Responsively*

Once [we] were alienated from God

and were enemies in [our] minds because of [our] evil behavior.

But now he has reconciled [us] by Christ's physical body through death to present [us] holy in

his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – if [we] continue in [our] faith established

and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that [we] heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven!

"The Gloria Patri"

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

"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.

Scripture Readings: Colossians 1:19 & 1:24-2:15 and Isaiah 6:1-4

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=colossians+1%3A19-2%3A15&version=NIV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6%3A1-4&version=NIV>

SERMON: "Fullness" by The Reverend Dr. Janet Hufford

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

In the first passage of Colossians, we encountered a garden-like scene, prompting us as mutual heirs in God's royal family to maturity and to be ever thankful for blessings from above! However, gardens are not immediately mature and full. Plants take time to grow from seed to seedling to budding flower and finally to fully bearing fruit.

In today's 3rd passage from **Colossians**, we encounter the garden in fullness. A glimpse of this is alluded to in the passage from last week, when we read **1:19**: "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him." Last week we realized fullness in recognizing Jesus as fully divine and fully human. This week we consider the fullness of God in being both transcendent that is far above and immanent while close with us on earth.

1st consider God's transcendence in heaven. Perhaps 1 of the best Scriptures to help us picture the fullness of the transcendent God is in **Isaiah 6:1-4**. Before hearing the reading from Isaiah, let us *pause* to prepare our hearts, minds, & spirits to encounter the holiness of God.

v. 1b: "I saw the Lord, high & exalted, seated on a throne; & the train of his robe filled the temple." *Pause* to picture the train of God's robe, so immense, long & abundant, that it pours forth like a flood from the throne & fills the temple. **v. 2-3** "Above him were seraphim, each with 6 wings: With 2 wings they covered their faces, with 2 they covered their feet, & with 2 they were flying. And they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.'" See the fullness of God spilling forth from heaven to fill the whole earth with his glory. In fullness God is both transcendent above & immanent, present with us on earth. *Pause* to consider the fullness of God. Yet the fullness of God is not contained, since it affects the praise of those who worship. **V. 4**: "At the sound of their voices the doorposts & thresholds shook & the temple was filled with smoke." (*Pause.*)

But also remember that the fullness of God the Father dwells in Jesus, the Son, the image of the invisible God. No wonder the apostle John heard Jesus say as recorded in John 14:7: "If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." Through Jesus we know the Father and, therefore, know the fullness of God.

Then in John 14:16-17 Jesus explains how God, the Father & Son, is also known through the advocate, the Spirit of truth, who we know as the Holy Spirit. So, we come to know God in full through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is God immanent, present with us on earth. Like the robes of God filled the temple & his glory reached the earth, the Holy Spirit was poured out onto believers on earth during Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection.

But before that Pentecost, the people of Israel were waiting in prayer for God to come to earth as the Messiah. We know the Messiah, as the Christ, Jesus, our Lord. While on earth, Jesus, as the fullness of God the Father, came to earth as God present & with us, God immanent, God Emmanuel. Jesus was born as God with us. Jesus taught and ministered on earth as God with us. Jesus died & rose from the dead as God with us.

But since Jesus went back into heaven with the Father, he is no longer with us, except through the Spirit. It is in this context that Paul writes of the fullness of Christ in **1:24-2:15** of Colossians.

Paul begins in **1:24** in speaking of he himself being filled through the Spirit: “Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.”

Next, he speaks of how God’s fullness once hidden as mystery, that is transcendent, becomes known when we as his body proclaim Christ. **V. 1:25-2:5**. So the fullness of God cannot be made know unless we become fully mature proclaiming Christ, teaching everyone.

Paul then continues in **v. 6-7**. He exhorts the Colossians and therefore exhorts us to be rooted, built up and strengthened. Only then can we be full, “overflowing with thankfulness.”

In the next verses Paul gives warning. **V. 8-10**. Paul cautions the Colossians to not regress, but to be brought to fullness. More on this next week.

He then reveals how vital Christ is in **v. 11-15**. Not only does fullness only come in Christ, but only through Christ do we live at all! Without Christ the seed never grows. Without Christ we remain dead in our sin. But in baptism our faith is watered and grows. In baptism we are buried with Christ and become alive with him. With our sin nailed to the dead wood of the cross, we are made fully alive in Christ.

What does this all mean for us? What if we do not feel full? What if the glass does not seem even half full, but almost fully empty? Converting to a metaphor for our day and age, what if we are running on empty? What if the tank is out of fuel? What if we are feeling stranded and stuck where we are?

For times such as this, Colossians is written. Remember that Paul wrote this letter while he was waiting a likely execution from prison in Rome. But Paul’s first stay in Rome didn’t end in death. Paul was released from prison and went onto to do more ministry, like we who have emerged from the prison of COVID. Paul traveled to new places and revisited where he had been before. Paul went onto to mentor others, like Timothy, Titus, John Mark, and Luke to continue proclaiming the fullness of God. Paul’s life was full, because Paul was full of the Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. Paul was full of hope and faith. And Paul’s hope is that churches like the one in Colossae and ours on main street in Pataskala will likewise be full and mature. Be filled with hope and faith, FPCP. Be filled with Christ and cling to the robes of Our Holy and glorious Father in heaven! Cling to the robes of Jesus who once walked this earth.

For the love and power of God is so full that it cannot be contained. It pours down from heaven and touches earth. Like the finger of God that touches that of the first human being painted on the ceiling of the Sistine chapel in Rome. God through the Holy Spirit reaches down to touch and fill us full. We simply need to respond to God’s reach. God does not force himself into our lives. Faith is not passive. Faith requires our response. So reach back to God. Seek God’s fullness. Pray for it. Open hearts to it. Open lives to it. Then filled with the fullness of God, live to affect the lives of others. Let us pray.

God with us Holy Spirit, we ask you to pour out more of the presence & power of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit upon us and within us. Fill us full to overflowing with gifts and fruit to serve you & your kingdom more by ministering to others, as you minister to us. Make us effective. Let us bear more visibly abundant fruit for your name’s sake, Jesus. Christ be glorified in us. Christ be praised. Amen.

Hymn of Response: “More About Jesus”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJNufmM9Dzk>

Affirmation of Faith:

Colossians 3:12-14

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+3%3A12-14&version=NIV>

PRAYERS of Joy and Concern, followed by:

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*

Jesus, Our Savior. In view of your mercy, we offer up our thanks thru giving. Amen.

Doxology

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

Closing Hymn: “I Sing the Mighty Power of God”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeSoE1Kmmv0>

Benediction: Colossians 3:17 *Responsively*

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him,... in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**