

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
WILLMAR, MN  
MAY 17, 2020**



**Prelude**

**Preparing Our Hearts**

*As you join us this morning for Facebook Live worship, I invite you to prepare your hearts and minds for worship as we sing together, "Holy Spirit."*

**"I Love You, Lord"**

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I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice  
to worship you; O my soul rejoice.  
Take joy, my King, in what you hear;  
may it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

## **Welcome to Worship**

Friends, we are doing worship in a new way during this season. The sanctuary is empty, but we are still the church. The church has always been the people, not the building in which we gather. Even if we cannot be together in this place, we are together in worship today by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and by the digital signal that helps us connect to one another.

Wherever you are, and whether you are watching it live or as a recording, this is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

## **Opening Hymn**

### **“The Heart of Worship**

words and music by Matt Redman

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When the music fades, all is stripped away,  
and I simply come;  
Longing just to bring something that's of worth  
that will bless your heart.  
I'll bring you more than a song,  
for a song in itself is not what You have required.  
You search much deeper within through the way things appear;  
You're looking into my heart.

I'm coming back to the heart of worship,  
and it's all about you, all about you, Jesus.  
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made it,  
when it's all about you, all about you, Jesus.

King of endless worth, no one could express  
how much you deserve.  
Though I'm weak and poor, all I have is yours,  
ev'ry single breath.  
I'll bring you more than a song,  
for a song in itself is not what You have required.  
You search much deeper within through the way things appear;  
You're looking into my heart.

I'm coming back to the heart of worship,  
and it's all about you, all about you, Jesus.  
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made it,  
when it's all about you, all about you, Jesus.

### **Opening Prayer**

Blessed are You, Lord our God!  
Glorious is Your name in all the earth!

We celebrate who You are,  
and all that You have done for us.  
You hold our lives in Your hands  
and catch us when we stumble.

So we come together today,  
led by Your Holy Spirit,  
to worship You:  
to sing Your praise,  
to confess our mistakes,  
and to receive Your love and mercy,  
made possible through the sacrifice  
of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Be present among us as we worship You,  
and as we open ourselves to Your Word.  
To You be all glory, now and forever. Amen.

### **Children's Time (Interactive)**

1. Everyone find a piece of paper and draw the biggest heart you can.
2. Inside the heart show (words or pictures) the things that bring you joy.
3. While you do that, we are going to sing:
  - I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart.
  - I've got the love of Jesus...
  - I've got the peace that passes understanding...
4. While we sing, please use the comment function to share what things you added to your heart...
5. Let us pray:

Dear God, thank you for loving us.  
Help us, every day,  
to do the things  
that fill our hearts with joy and love  
as we learn to follow you.  
Amen.

## **Scripture Lesson**

*What fills your heart with joy? I hope you did the activity along with the kids. If you didn't, think through the list of things you would have put in your heart. What fills your heart with joy? Maybe you instantly can create a long list. Perhaps you struggle to come up with even 1 or 2 items. Give this some serious consideration as we explore today's text, because our Gospel lesson from John has some important things to say about the condition of our hearts. Listen for the word of God as it comes to us today from John 14:15-21.*

### **John 14:15-21**

<sup>15</sup> "If you love me, you will keep<sup>[a]</sup> my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,<sup>[b]</sup> to be with you forever. <sup>17</sup> This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in<sup>[c]</sup> you. <sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. <sup>19</sup> In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

## **Message**

### **"Whole-Hearted" Rev. Leanne B. Thompson**

It started with one bag of starter, a gift that came home with one of my roommates along with a loaf of amazingly delicious Amish Friendship Bread. What followed was an adventure. I don't know if you are familiar with Amish Friendship Bread, but it starts as a gift from a friend – a bag of 1 starter. With it are 10 days of instructions. Over the 10 days you feed the starter sugar,

flour, and milk. It grows and bubbles into a wonderfully fragrant, yeasty mixture. On day 10 you divide it up and bake some (yum), give some starter away (with instructions), and keep some for yourself so you can begin the process all over again. One food blogger refers to this bread as “...an edible chain letter.”<sup>1</sup> And she isn’t wrong. For weeks we diligently and lovingly fed our starter and watched it grow. We baked fragrant vanilla-cinnamon loaves that we ate with relish. And we gave away starter and loaves of bread to everyone we knew, and to some we didn’t know. By the end we lost count of how many cups of sugar, flour, and milk we had measured out. We had baked more bread than we thought possible, and we had run out of friends to give it to. The starter, at least. By the end, we were baking most of the starter and giving away the loaves on their own. And then we quit, because it was a lot of work to babysit the starter, and we were all a little tired of Amish Friendship Bread.

There was a lot I didn’t know back then. We didn’t have Google to help us. I didn’t know that what we were growing was a sourdough starter, I didn’t know there were dozens of recipes in which it could be used, I didn’t know you could freeze it and take a break. But here’s what I did know: it felt good to grow and nurture something; it felt good to give something away.

When I drew my own heart this week and began filling it, some of the things that went in there – service, compassion, generosity – because they bring me joy. I recognized clearly in those first gift loaves, but over the years I’ve felt it over the years in a multitude of ways. It feels good to give – it brings we joy. So that went into my heart. But many other things went in there too: time with family; shared meals; good books; music; a steaming mug of tea; birdsong. I started filling my heart, and just kept going, and soon I was out of room inside. I had to start filling around the edges in the margins of the page.

Here’s the truth this lesson teaches us: what is in our hearts overflows from our hearts. What we put in there matters, because it will flow out from our lives.

If we fill our hearts with bitterness and resentment what flows out of us is mess and destruction. If we fill it with love and light, that is what shines out. That’s why Jesus makes a point of telling us to keep his commandments in our

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.crazyforcrust.com/amish-friendship-bread/>

hearts so that it is his love, justice, and mercy that overflow from us. Easy, right? No. It's not easy. In fact, I suspect that it might be the hardest thing we ever do – the work of a lifetime needing constant practice. Our human nature is not always to be good, and loving, and kind. Our human nature is not to believe the best about people or give of our time and energy to help them when it is an inconvenience. It is human nature to hold on to resentment and shame.

Jesus knew that.

Which is why he makes a point of introducing us to the Holy Spirit – our helper, our advocate.

We don't talk much about the Holy Spirit. She is a mystery: unquantifiable, but essential; invisible, and always with us. We don't know how to explain the Holy Spirit, but we know when she has been at work in our lives. I don't know how to explain the chemical reaction that made our starter grow, but I know it was happening – I could see it happening, smell it happening. That's kind of how it is with the Holy Spirit. Something is happening we can't explain, but we experience the results: we are able to do and be what is beyond us; we are able to endure what overwhelms us; we are able to rally the strength and presence to love God and love our neighbors and ourselves; we are buoyant of spirit, positive and encouraging; we are overflowing with Christ's mercy and love.

But it takes some work and intentionality on our part. "If you love me you will keep my commandments." Picture your heart like a vessel and picture what happens when you fill it with avarice, greed, pride, lust, resentment, or vanity. When it gets full and begins to overflow with all of that, it isn't love, compassion, and generosity of spirit that flows out.

We make choices every day about what to feed our spirits. We can choose to feed ourselves on the bread of life and living water. We can plant encouraging words of scripture, and small acts of kindness. We can sow seeds of grace and mercy. There are so many ways to do that: daily devotional readings and prayer; meditation; inspirational reading; a daily practice of gratitude; time in nature; fun with friends and family. This is all starting to sound familiar – it's the things I listed in my heart that give me joy. What is in your heart? What activities and practices fill your heart to overflowing with joy?

Here's the best news. We don't have to do this ourselves. The Holy Spirit is with us. And some days we are going to need her more than others, especially when we are feeling down, feeling the weight of grief or anxiety, feeling overwhelmed or empty. The Holy Spirit will meet us where we are and carry us the rest of the way that we can't go ourselves. That is good news in these trying times. Keep doing the good things, even when it is hard. You won't always feel the joy, but it will be there, growing inside of you with the help of the Holy Spirit. May the Spirit fill you to overflowing in spite of your circumstances so that you may know the joy of giving away something that blesses those around you. Alleluia! Amen.

### **Hymn of Affirmation**

#### **"Trust and Obey"**

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When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word,  
    what a glory he sheds on our way!  
While we do his good will he abides with us still  
    and with all who will trust and obey.  
Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,  
    but his smile quickly drives it away;  
Not a doubt nor a fear, not a sigh nor a tear  
    can abide while we trust and obey.  
Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

But we never can prove the delights of his love  
    until all on the altar we lay.  
For the favor he shows and the joy he bestows  
    are for those who will trust and obey.  
Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Written by John Birch, and posted on his Faith and Worship website. Visit that site for many other excellent worship resources. <http://www.faithandworship.com/>

Father God, in whose love we live and move,  
we pray for a world crying out to feel loved,  
wanted, cherished and unique.

**Heavenly Father, source of all love**

We pray for a world torn apart by conflict and war.  
A world that lives uneasily in a climate of fear  
with no clear vision for future days

**Heavenly Father, source of all hope**

We pray for a world that thinks less of others than of self.  
A world where division between nations, race, religion  
neighbour and family leads to distrust

**Heavenly Father, source of all peace**

We pray for a world that is short on happiness,  
too busy to enjoy this world you have created,  
too preoccupied with living to appreciate life.

**Heavenly Father, source of all joy**

We pray for a world where spiritual longing is satisfied  
by fashionable notions and temporary solutions  
with no thought for tomorrow.

**Heavenly Father, source of our Salvation**

We pray for a world that needs to know your love, your hope,  
your peace, your joy and Salvation.

A world that needs to know it is special, unique  
and is uniquely loved by a Heavenly Father.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God,  
we pray the prayer which Jesus taught us:

**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.**

### **Invitation to the Offering**

*Friends, we cannot pass an offering plate online. I want to thank you for continuing to give generously, sending your offerings to the church. Your gifts allow us to continue to be the church. And now, for your convenience, you can give online by visiting our website. So, I would like to take this moment to say thank you, and to bless the offerings you make on a regular basis: your financial gifts; and your lives offered to God's service. Let us pray...*

### **Offering Prayer**

God of all time and space,  
you initiated the relationship of love and generosity with creation  
at a time before and beyond all knowing.

Through the Word and the Spirit,  
you continue in eternal love for all beings.

Fill us with a deep and abiding awareness of your presence,  
your call, and your grace in our lives and in our world.

Shape us to into the people you have made us to be –  
poured out in creative mercy  
for the sake of Jesus Christ in all creation.

May the gifts we offer, and our lives offered to your service  
reflect your love into the world.

Amen.

## Closing Hymn

### **“Forever”**

words and music by Chris Tomlin  
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Give thanks to the Lord our God and King;  
His love endures forever.  
For he is good, he is above all things;  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise.  
With a mighty hand and outstretched arm;  
His love endures forever.  
For the life that's been reborn;  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise.  
Sing praise, sing praise.

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong,  
Forever God is with us, forever, forever.

From the rising to the setting sun;  
His love endures forever.  
And by the grace of God we will carry on;  
His love endures forever.  
Sing praise, sing praise.  
Sing praise, sing praise.

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong,  
Forever God is with us, forever, forever.

## **Charge and Benediction**

Go forth singing God's praises,  
remembering God's promises and blessings.  
Joyfully give back to the world  
the love you have received  
believing that God loves all creation  
and abides with us.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord  
with your whole heart!  
Alleluia! Amen.

## **AMISH FRIENDSHIP BREAD AND STARTER**

### **INGREDIENTS**

#### **STARTER**

- 1 package active dry yeast 2 1/4 teaspoons
- 1/4 cup warm water 110°F
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup milk (nonfat, regular or 2%)

#### **FEEDINGS (2)**

- 2 cups granulated sugar divided
- 2 cups all-purpose flour divided
- 2 cups milk divided (non-fat okay)

#### **FOR THE BREAD:**

- 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup starter
- 2/3 cup oil
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Nuts, chocolate chips, or cinnamon sugar optional (see note)

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

*NOTE: Do not use metal utensils, spoons, or bowls. Do not refrigerate starter.*

#### **DAY 1: MAKE YOUR STARTER**

1. Make your starter: Stir yeast into warm water. Let sit for 10 minutes.
2. Stir sugar and flour in a large bowl. Stir in milk until mixture is smooth.
3. Stir the yeast mixture into the flour mixture.  
Cover loosely and store on the counter.
4. Optional: place mixture in a gallon size ziploc bag and seal, releasing all the air. Store on counter.

#### **DAYS 2-4**

1. Stir the mixture once per day or mash the bag if you're using a bag.

#### **DAY 5: FEEDING #1**

1. Feed the mixture: Stir 1 cup each sugar, flour, and milk into the starter.

Cover loosely and store on the counter. (If your mixture is in a bag, just add the ingredients to the bag and mash until they are incorporated.)

### **DAYS 6-9**

1. Stir the mixture once per day or mash the bag if you're using a bag.

### **DAY 10: FEEDING #2/BAKING/GIFTING**

1. Feed the mixture: Stir 1 cup each sugar, flour, and milk into the starter. Cover loosely and store on the counter. (If your mixture is in a bag, just add the ingredients to the bag and mash until they are incorporated.)
2. Reserve 1 cup of starter to continue growing on your counter. Consider today (Day 10) to be Day 1, and repeat these instructions starting with Day 2 tomorrow.
3. Remove 1 cup of starter to use in the Amish Friendship Bread Recipe (see directions below).
4. For gifting: Measure out 1 cup of remaining starter and place in a new gallon size ziploc bag (or bowl for gifting). Repeat with a second 1 cup starter. You may have an additional 1 cup of starter, which you can place in a third bag to give OR you can make a second batch of the bread (recipe below). You can also freeze this 1 cup of starter to use in the future (freeze in a gallon size bag).

### **FRIENDSHIP BREAD RECIPE:**

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Grease pan(s) with butter or shortening or spray with nonstick baking spray (the cooking spray that comes with flour in it).
2. Stir baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and flour in a medium bowl. Set aside.
3. Stir starter, oil, and 1 cup sugar with a wooden spoon or spatula. Stir in eggs, 1 at a time, then stir in vanilla. Gently fold in dry ingredients. Stir in chocolate chips or nuts, if using (see note).
4. Place batter in pan(s). Optionally, you can sprinkle with cinnamon sugar (see note).
5. Bake according to your pan size below, until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool before removing from pan.
6. Pan sizes:
  - Two 4x8-inch or two 9x5-inch loaf pans: 40-50 minutes
  - One 10.5x16-inch loaf pan: 50-60 minutes