

Reading Scripture

Lay Reader

Epistle Lesson Acts 8:26-39 (NRSVUE)

Gospel Lesson Luke 9:7-9, 18-22 (The Voice)

Reader: May God add blessing to the reading, hearing, and living of these words.

Many Voices: Amen

Proclaiming

Pastor Dave

“What Are We Doing Here in the Jesus Wars?”

***Singing**

“Christ Beside Me”

TFWS #2166

Giving

Pastor Dave

Blessing our Gifts with Music and Prayer

Lay Reader

Many Voices: Holy and Gracious God, we marvel at your love for all creation. Jesus’ compassion moves us and Your Spirit inspires us. We offer our gifts and our whole selves to continue your work in the world. Amen.

***Singing**

“In Christ There is No East or West”

UMH #548

***Sending Forth**

Pastor Dave

Exiting Music

**Please stand if you are able.*

LEADERS IN TODAY’S WORSHIP SERVICE

LAY READER

KIM NAVE

SONG LEADERS

GAIL GIRARD, RUTH SATORIUS &

SUSAN SPENCER

CHURCH STAFF

MINISTERS

ALL DISCIPLES OF JESUS

LEAD PASTOR

REV. DAVE BUERSTETTA

OFFICE MANAGER

KATIE WOJCIESZAK

MUSIC DIRECTOR

JILL KOHLER

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

KATRINA NOLAN

OFFICE ASSISTANT

CINDY WHITE

PHONE 815-467-2322

WWW.MINOOKAUMC.COM

**Minooka
United Methodist
Church**

1210 S. Ridge Road
Minooka, IL 60447
815-467-2322

www.minookaumc.com



Welcome to Minooka United Methodist Church

Sunday, March 17th, 2024

9:30AM

Acts 8:26-39 (NRSV)

²⁶ Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” ³⁰ So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹ He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³² Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.
³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed

to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” ³⁸ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more and went on his way rejoicing.

Luke 9:7-9, 18-22 (The Voice)

⁷⁻⁸ *Their mission didn't go unnoticed.* The local official installed by Rome, Herod, was especially anxious about the news because rumors were flying. Some people said that Elijah or one of the other ancient prophets had been resurrected, while others said that John, *famous for his ritual cleansing*, was alive *and preaching again*.

Herod: ⁹ I am the one who beheaded John. So who is this man who is causing such a stir?

Herod *was curious about Jesus and wanted to see Him.*

¹⁸ Once Jesus was praying in solitude. The disciples were nearby, and He came to them with a question.

Jesus: What are the people saying about Me?

Disciples: ¹⁹ Some people think You're John the Baptist. Others say You're the prophet Elijah, or else one of the other ancient prophets who has come back from the dead.

Jesus: ²⁰ Ah, but what about you? Who do you say that I am?

Peter: God's Anointed, *the Liberating King.*

Jesus (sternly): ²¹ Don't tell anyone this. ²² The Son of Man must suffer intensely. He must be rejected by the religious establishment—the elders, the chief priests, the religious scholars. Then He will be killed. And then, on the third day He will be raised.

Entering Music

Welcoming

Pastor Dave

Preparing

***Gathering**

Reader: In the name of Creativity God who shapes each person in the divine image and delights in the diversity of creation;
Many Voices: In the name of Liberator God who hears the cries of the persecuted and breaks the bonds of oppression;

Reader: In the name of Loving God from whom all goodness flows, who rejoices in true love wherever it is found;

Many Voices: In all the names of God, all are welcome in this place!

***Singing**

“Welcome”

Worship & Song #3152

Conversing with Children

Praying

Lay Reader

[Quiet reflection]

Reader: Loving God of South and North, of East and West, of sea and sky, of mountains and plains, of humans and animals, everything made by you, all of it good, even very good. You give us free will to make choices, accepting that we would not always make the best ones for ourselves or the rest of creation. We confess the hard truth that since time immemorial, humanity has often done more to bring fear, anger, hate, and suffering rather than peace, understanding, and uplift.

Many Voices: We confess the hard truth that we have broken away from each other instead of healing our differences and seeing our diversity as a gift and a reflection of you, O God. We are sorry for all the ways we continue to repeat the sins of our ancestors.

[quiet reflection]

Reader: God of grace and mercy, hear our prayer and forgive us. Help us to face our fears and to share your vision for a world united in compassion and love for all people.

As forgiven and forgiving people, let us pray together as Jesus taught us, saying... [Lord's Prayer, UMH #894]

***Singing**

“Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”

UMH #349(x2)

In Christ There Is No East Or West

Verse 1

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

Verse 2

In Christ shall true hearts everywhere
Their high communion find;
His service is the golden cord
Close binding humankind.

Verse 3

In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek,
And neither slave nor free;
Both male and female heirs are made,
And all are kin to me.

Verse 4

In Christ now meet both East and West,
In Him meet South and North;
All Christly souls are one in Him
Throughout the whole wide earth.

John Oxenham, Stewart Landon, Unknown

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HYMNS

Welcome

Verse 1

Let's walk together for a while and ask where we begin
To build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in,
To be the hands of healing and to plant the seed of peace,

Refrain

Singing welcome, welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this place.

Verse 2

Let's talk together of a time when we will share a feast,
Where pride and power kneel to serve the lonely and the least,
And joy will set the table as we join our hands to pray,

Refrain

Singing welcome, welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this place.

Verse 3

Let's dream together of the day when earth and heaven are one,
A city built of love and light, the new Jerusalem,
Where our mourning turns to dancing, every creature lifts its voice,
(Refrain)

Refrain

Crying welcome, welcome to this place
You're invited to come and know God's grace
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here; All are welcome in this place.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in his wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow
Strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.
(x2)

Christ Beside Me

1.
Christ beside me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me the King of my heart;
Christ within me, Christ below me,
Christ above me never to depart.

2.
Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,
Christ all around me shield in the strife;
Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,
Christ in my rising Light of my life.

3.
Christ beside me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me the King of my heart;
Christ within me, Christ below me,
Christ above me never to depart.