

October 11, 2020  
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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## **PRELUDE**

*Rejoice, Rejoice O Lord* (Marks)

## **CALL TO WORSHIP** (Based on Psalm 118:24 and Philippians 4:4)

Preacher: This is the day that the Lord has made...

**Congregation: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Preacher: Rejoice in the Lord, always! Again, I say: REJOICE!

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here at Starview United Church of Christ.

**Congregation: We rejoice in God whose goodness and steadfast love are everlasting.**

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*All people: Confession is not an easy or pleasant thing to do. We would like to think that we have been good and faithful disciples, following your way, O God. But, we know in our hearts, the many ways in which we have turned our backs on you and rejected your will for our lives. Like the people in the wilderness, we create idols for ourselves and worship them. Quickly, we discover their shallowness, then, wonder why we feel so disappointed and empty. Stop us in our tracks, O Lord. Help us to be open to your will for our lives. Give us the persistence and courage to follow it. Heal us from our wayward actions and attitudes. Merciful God, come to us this day with your healing power and help us, again, to be your disciples, who are able to offer hope and peace to your hurting and wounded world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

## **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Preacher: Even though our ancestors sinned in the wilderness - creating idols to worship and forgetting about God: The Lord, while disappointed, turned away from wrath and offered forgiveness. People of God, hear then, the Good News and REJOICE: God, through Jesus Christ, forgives us still.

*All people: Thanks be to God!*

## **HYMN**

*Rejoice, You Pure in Heart*

*With your masks on, please feel free to:  
hum loudly, sing softly, as well as clap your hands and tap your feet*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING*****Stiff-Necked People*****Exodus 32:1-14**

Liturgist: We continue our journey through the wilderness with the newly freed slaves. Exodus, chapter 32, verses 1 through 14, reads:

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”<sup>2</sup> Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.”<sup>3</sup> So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron.<sup>4</sup> He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold,<sup>[a]</sup> and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”<sup>5</sup> When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.”<sup>6</sup> They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; <sup>8</sup>they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’”<sup>9</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. <sup>10</sup>Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

<sup>11</sup>But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, “O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? <sup>12</sup>Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. <sup>13</sup>Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’”<sup>14</sup> And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

This is the Word of the Lord. Let all the people say, “Thanks be to God.”

**EPISTLE READING***Rejoice Always***Philippians 4:1-19**

Liturgist: Today's Epistle reading is recorded in the 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Apostle Paul's letter to an early church in Philippi. Paul wrote:

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

<sup>2</sup> I urge Euodia (pronounced: You-Dee-ah) and I urge Syntyche (pronounced: Sin-tee-chee) to be of the same mind in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about<sup>[f]</sup> these things. <sup>9</sup> Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

<sup>10</sup> I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. <sup>11</sup> Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. <sup>12</sup> I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me. <sup>14</sup> In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress.

<sup>15</sup> You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. <sup>16</sup> For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. <sup>17</sup> Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account. <sup>18</sup> I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

May the Lord bless us with understanding in the hearing of these holy words.

**READING**

Liturgist:

*Invited to a Wedding Feast***Matthew 22:1-14**

In a previous chapter, in regards to Jesus' teachings and healings, the religious leaders posed this question to him: By what authority do you do these things? In response, Jesus has been telling parables. Today's Gospel reading is yet, another. Matthew, chapter 22, verses 1 through 14 reads:

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: <sup>2</sup> “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. <sup>3</sup> He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. <sup>4</sup> Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ <sup>5</sup> But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, <sup>6</sup> while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. <sup>7</sup> The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup> Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ <sup>10</sup> Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

<sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, <sup>12</sup> and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup> Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ <sup>14</sup> For many are called, but few are chosen.”

This is the Good News of Jesus Christ. Let all the people say, “Praise be to Christ.”

**SERMON***What God is Like***Ms. Cathy Rentzel****PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

All people: *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.*

**OFFERING INVITATION**

Liturgist:

In this moment, our hearts are so full of the Holy Spirit, and we cannot help but be reminded of the many gifts that constitute our daily lives. Let us take a moment then, in silence to reflect on the wonderful opportunity we have to offer God a small portion of who we are and what we have in the giving of our time, talent, and money. As we sit in silent prayer, let us be sure to say, “Thank you, Lord for our many blessings. We love you!” (A Full Moment of Silent Prayer)

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Liturgist: Please join me in dedicating ourselves and our gifts to the Lord's service.

*All people:* ***God of extravagant love, you have reached out to us and blessed us in so many ways – especially through your most extravagant gift of all – Jesus Christ. We rejoice in your invitation to share our lives with him, by loving God and others, as we love ourselves. Bless these gifts and us, as we re-dedicate ourselves anew as disciples of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.***

## SPECIAL MUSIC

*Here I am Lord*

Rachael Wertz, Solo

## BENEDICTION

Preacher: We have received blessing upon blessing from the Lord.  
 Let us go into the world offering hope and peace to all we meet.  
 Be involved in justice and healing ministries in the name of the Lord.  
 Go in peace.

*All people:* ***Amen.***

## POSTLUDE

*Blessings from the Heart of the Lord* (Johnson)

# Rejoice, You Pure in Heart

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Edward H. Plumptre, 1865; alt.

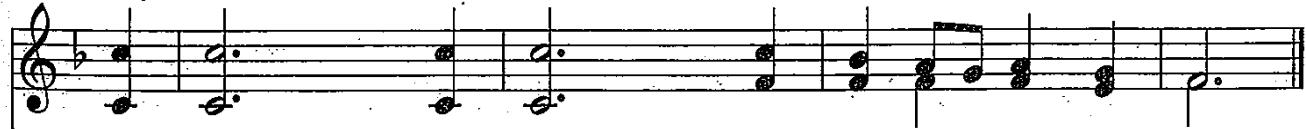
Ps. 20:5; Phil. 4:4



1 Re - joice, you pure in heart; lift prais - es to the sky;  
 2 Bright youth and sea - soned age, strong souls and spir - its meek,  
 3 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg-ing praise,  
 4 Yes, on through life's long path, still chant-ing as you go,  
 5 Praise God who rules all worlds, the ris - en Christ a - dore,



Your fes - tal ban - ner wave with joy, the cross of Christ raise high!  
 Raise high your free, ex - ult - ing song, God's won-drous prais - es speak.  
 Send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of an - cient days.  
 From youth to age, by night and day, in glad-ness and in woe:  
 Praise God the Spir - it, Ho - ly Fire, one God for ev - er - more!

*Refrain*

Re - joice, re - joice, re - joice, give thanks and sing.  
 Re - joice Re - joice



*This hymn, inspired by Philippians 4:4, was written for the Choral Festival held at Peterborough Cathedral in England. The*

Tune: MARION S.M. with refrain  
Arthur H. Messiter, 1883

