***Bulletin for September 12, 2021- Marilyn Schueneman, Guest Preacher***

***David Perample, Liturgist***

***We Gather Together: Ringing the Bells***

***Welcome and Announcements***

***We Are Called to Praise God***

**Gathering Music:** “Give Me Faith” – Elevation Worship

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Come away from dullness and complacency. Stay alert! God is calling us to listen and learn.

**All: The heavens are telling the glory of God. The firmament proclaims God’s handiwork.**

Leader: How long will we refuse the wisdom God offers? How long will we ignore God’s counsel and reproof?

**All: The law of God is perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of God are sure, making wise the simple.**

Leader: Our waywardness separates us from God. Then, when we call on God, we hear no answer.

**All: We gather to renew our relationship with God. We seek enlightenment and the revival of our souls.**

**Centering Hymn:** “Be Lifted High” Sing! #74

**Invocation**

**ALL: God of all wisdom, renew our sense of awe and wonder as we gather before you, the Source of all knowledge. Make your Word known to us, and stretch out your hand to touch us. Draw us away from our own devices that we may truly listen to the witness of all creation speaking of wonders we have ignored. Give us eyes to see beauty in all around us. Align us with truth and righteousness. Quiet our wandering thoughts and awaken our trust. Show us the disciplines we need to stay in touch with you each day. Amen.**

**Passing of the Peace**

Leader: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

(You are invited to share with your neighbor the ancient Christian greeting,

“The peace of Christ be with you…” “…and also with you.”)

 *(In thanksgiving for God’s grace, we sing)*

*My Tribute*

**To God be the glory,**

**To God be the glory,**

**To God be the glory for the things You have done.**

**With Your blood, You have saved me;**

**With your power, You have raised me.**

**To God be the glory for the things You have done.**

***We Receive God’s Word***

**The Reading of the Holy Scripture**

**First Lesson: Proverbs 1:20-33**

 *(Wisdom is portrayed as a woman going about the streets appealing, like the word of the prophet, to the common people. The message is clear. Those who espouse wisdom, which is defined as "the fear of the Lord", will live secure but those who reject wisdom can only face calamity and anguish.)*

***20****Wisdom cries out in the street;
    in the squares she raises her voice.****21****At the busiest corner she cries out;
    at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:****22****“How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?
How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing
    and fools hate knowledge?****23****Give heed to my reproof;
I will pour out my thoughts to you;
    I will make my words known to you.****24****Because I have called and you refused,
    have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,****25****and because you have ignored all my counsel
    and would have none of my reproof,****26****I also will laugh at your calamity;
    I will mock when panic strikes you,****27****when panic strikes you like a storm,
    and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
    when distress and anguish come upon you.****28****Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;
    they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.****29****Because they hated knowledge
    and did not choose the fear of the Lord,****30****would have none of my counsel,
    and despised all my reproof,****31****therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way
    and be sated with their own devices.****32****For waywardness kills the simple,
    and the complacency of fools destroys them;****33****but those who listen to me will be secure
    and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.”*

**Second Lesson: James 3:1-12**

 *(The role of teachers in the early Church was important and honorable but liable to abuse if sought for unworthy motives. James uses this warning to develop a wider teaching on the Christian use of speech. Interesting analogies are drawn between the tongue and other small things that exercise a great deal of power and control, both for good or for evil.)*

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+3%3A1-12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-30303a)] for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. **2**For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. **3**If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. **4**Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. **5**So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! **6**And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+3%3A1-12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-30308b)] and is itself set on fire by hell.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+3%3A1-12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-30308c)] **7**For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, **8**but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. **9**With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. **10**From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+3%3A1-12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-30312d)] this ought not to be so. **11**Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? **12**Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+3%3A1-12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-30314e)] yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

**Special Music:** “By Faith” – Getty/Townend

**Reflection Reading**

 **Gospel: Mark 8:27-38**

31Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

34He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+8%3A27-38&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-24532b)] will save it. 36For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38Those who are ashamed of me and of my words[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+8%3A27-38&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-24535c)] in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

**REFLECTION Marilyn Schueneman, Guest Preacher**

**\*Hymn of Praise:** “Take My Life and Let it Be” HC #391 verses 1,2,3,6

***We Offer Our Prayers to God***

**Pastoral Prayer**

**We Pray in Silence**

**We Share Our Lord’s Prayer:**

 **Our Creator, 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.**

***We Offer Our Gifts to God***

**We Offer Our Gifts**

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift is from above.” *(James 1:17).*   Thank you for the generosity within us that comes from you. We are invited to return the first fruits of our labors, through the outreach of our church. Our offerings are one measure of our call as ambassadors for Christ.

*Singing with praise:* **“Grateful” #143 Sing!**

**Grateful for the life you give us,**

**Thankful for your Holy One,**

**Joyful in your Spirit flowing**

**Over all, O God of Love.**

**Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,**

**Thankful for your Holy Word.**

**Joyful in your mercy flowing,**

**We will praise you.**

**\*We Dedicate our Gifts to God** (*together, we pray--)*

 **We offer the treasures of this world as a way of recalling all of us to a right relationship with you, O God, the source of all wisdom and truth. Your design for life is more to be desired than the finest gold. To learn from you and to serve you is our highest joy. May our offerings and our daily lives communicate this message. Amen.**

 **Parting Hymn**: “Here I Am Lord” HC #525

**Benediction**

Pastor: Let your words this week proclaim God’s love. May your hearts’ meditations be acceptable to God.

**All: We seek to let God guide our tongues. We want to speak without arrogance or false pride.**

Pastor: Listen for the wisdom God wants you to know. Seek God’s counsel and reproof each day.

**All: We will look for God in the midst of creation. We will seek God’s face in the people around us.**

Pastor: The heavens are telling the glory of God. God’s hand is outstretched to touch and heal you.

**All: How good it is to sense God’s guidance! How exciting it is to follow where Christ leads!**

**Let us go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast to that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the afflicted, honor all people, love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Closing** “Go Make a Difference” Sing! #199 (refrain only)

**Go make a difference.**

**We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Go make a difference.**

**We can make a difference.**

**Go make a difference in the world.**

**Postlude**