



*Grounded in the grace of God, we are a
vibrant Christian community, disciples of all ages,
gathered for worship and nurture, scattered to serve and to love.*

MPC Mission Statement adopted by the Session March 31, 2008

WORSHIP for JUNE 27, 2021
FIFTH SUNDAY
after PENTECOST

PRELUDE — *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

LOBE DEN HERREN

*Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near;
join me in glad adoration!*

*Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
granted in what he ordaineth?*

*Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again;
gladly for aye we adore him.*

CALL to WORSHIP — from *Psalms* 29

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

One: The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders.

All: The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

One: The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

All: The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness.

One: The voice of the Lord causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, 'Glory!'

All: May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace! Let us worship God together!

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

Merciful God, more times than we can count we have put you to the test: seeking to guide your will; clinging to control that was never ours to claim. All the while hardening our hearts to glimpses of your power and your love revealed all around us. We forget that you soften hearts for a living. We forget that you alone are God. Forgive us when we try to take your place. Forgive us when we let other idols in our lives take your place. Heal us of our sin, wash us in your mercy, give us hearts that are softened by your grace and open to you alone.

(Time for silent prayer and confession.)

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: Beloved church, the Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Be assured that God's grace is greater than anything we could ever hope or imagine. And so let us rejoice together and proclaim the good news of the Gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen!

RESPONSE to GOD'S GRACE — *Glory to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE READING — *Exodus 5:1-2; 7:8-23*

Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, “Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness.”’ But Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the Lord, that I should heed him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go.’

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, ‘When Pharaoh says to you, “Perform a wonder”, then you shall say to Aaron, “Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.”’ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as he had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts. Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron’s staff swallowed up theirs. Still Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.

Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Pharaoh’s heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake. Say to him, “The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, ‘Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness.’ But until now you have not listened. Thus says the Lord, ‘By this you shall know that I am the Lord.’ See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.”’ The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to Aaron, “Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water—so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.”’

Moses and Aaron did just as the Lord commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

The Hardest of Hearts

Pastor Rhodes

AFFIRMATION of FAITH — from *A Brief Statement of Faith, PC (USA)*

We Trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good. God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

HYMN — *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*

I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Lord, I want to be a Christian, in my heart, in my heart;

Lord I want to be a Christian, in my heart.

In my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart.

*Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart;
 Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart
 In my heart, in my heart,
 Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.*

*Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart, in my heart;
 Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.
 In my heart, in my heart,
 Lord, I want to be more holy in my heart.*

*Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart;
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.
 In my heart, in my heart,
 Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

POSTLUDE — *When Israel Was in Egypt's Land*

GO DOWN MOSES

*When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go;
 oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go!*

Refrain:

*Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land;
 tell old Pharaoh: let my people go!*

*"This saith the Lord," bold Moses said, "Let my people go!
 If not, I'll smite your first born dead. Let my people go!"*

Refrain

*"No more shall they in bondage toil: let my people go!
 Let them come out with Egypt's spoil: let my people go!"*

Refrain

*O let us all from bondage flee; let my people go!
 And let us all in Christ be free: let my people go!*

Refrain

QUESTIONS *for* REFLECTION

- How might you be hardening your heart to God?
- How might God be seeking to melt and mold your heart in a new way?

OTHERS PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Tim Carpenter – Director of Music

Nancy Powers – Pianist

James Moyer – Soloist

Video Ministry Volunteers

Photos may be found on unsplash.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

****Please note all announcements for Sunday bulletins are due by noon the Tuesday before they are to be published. Please email announcements to Bulletin@MPCusa.net.***

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - JUNE 27

Please join us in-person for a Congregational Meeting this Sunday, June 27, immediately following worship, for the purpose of approving the report of the 2021 Nominating Committee to elect new Church Officers. Your presence in-person would be very much appreciated, however, we will also seek to provide a virtual meeting option via Zoom.

SUPPORT YOUTH IN MISSION'S 2021 TRIP TO WEST VIRGINIA!

Twenty-four youth and adults will be heading to West Virginia for the first time in two years for a Youth in Mission trip. The group of teens and adults will be traveling to Pipestem, West Virginia to make needed repairs to homes of residents in need. The dates of the trip for the group of fourteen women and ten men will be from July 11 to July 17, 2021. The group will stay at the Appalachian South Folk Life Center and along with repairing homes, will engage in a week-long devotional on "Who is my neighbor".

Car Wash and Bake Sale this Sunday!

The group is asking for your support of their second car wash and bake sale fundraiser to be held this Sunday, June 27, following the congregational meeting. So whether you are streaming worship from home or worshipping in-person, please plan on stopping by MPC for a car wash and to pick up some baked treats!

Stock Sale

The YIM are also raising funds through a "Stock Sale." To participate in the stock sale you can give by check or on-line at the MPC giving portal. If giving by check please write "YIM Stock Sale" on the memo line of your check. To give online go to www.mpcusa.org/give and click on "Online Giving Portal." In the Giving Portal, enter your donation amount next to "YIM Stock Donation."

As always, the Youth in Mission appreciate your support!

MPC CLOTHING CENTER SEASONAL CLOSING

The Clothing Center has now closed for the summer. Please **DO NOT** leave any clothing donations at the church. We will reopen again mid-September. Donations will resume at that time. Thank you for all your support throughout the year.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

For the first time in a LONG time, the Church Office is now open for regular hours (Monday-Thursday, 10am-4pm). We hope to have the chance to see you sometime soon! As a reminder, masks must be worn in the building at all times.