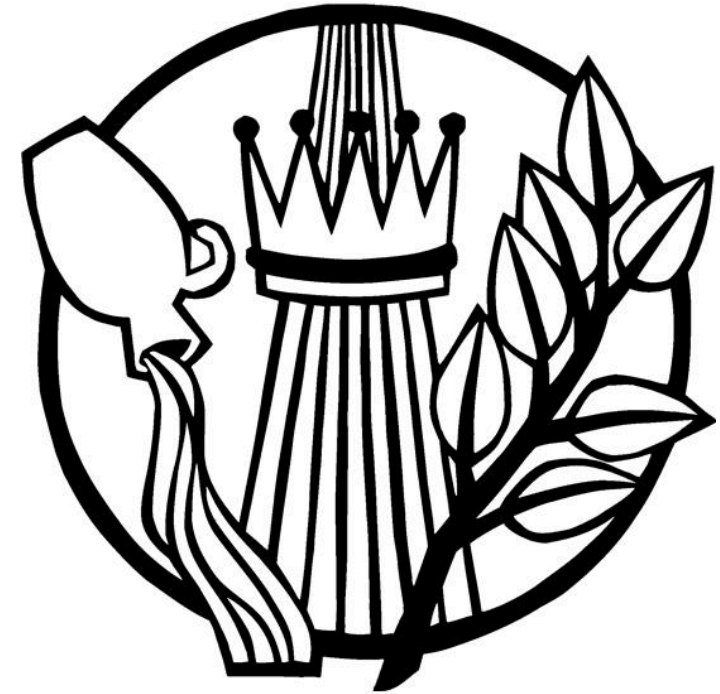


Welcome to Worship at Parkview United Methodist Church

Sunday, July 20



***Our mission as the people of Parkview
is to grow in faith in Christ and reach out in God's love!***



Our vision is to ignite the Holy Spirit in each child and adult by intentionally encouraging a vibrant personal relationship with God as we actively grow together in faith, while leading and teaching others about God's love and salvation. We invite you to join us in our mission and vision as the folks of Parkview and the people of God!

Ministers of Parkview: Everyone!

(715)986-2467...parkviewtl.com...236 Maple St. N, Turtle Lake

Pastor: Adam Woods

(608) 513-2937... pastor.adamwoods@gmail.com

Pastor Adam will hold office hours this week on Wednesday 2:00-3:30 and Friday 9:00-noon

Ushers/Greeters: Margie Broker

Scripture Reader: Diane Hoffman

Accompanist: Judy Benes

Gathering as the People of God

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements, and Opening Prayer

If you have a special prayer request to lift up this morning, please feel free to either share it briefly during Announcement time or write it out on the “Prayer Request” card in the pew. Please place completed “Prayer Request” cards in the Noisy Can during the “Noisy Offering” time immediately after the Little Disciples’ Message in a few moments. Prayer requests will be included in the Prayers of the People later in the worship service.

Opening Hymns

“Make Me a Servant” #2176 *(The Faith We Sing)*

“Shine, Jesus, Shine” #2173 *(The Faith We Sing)*

Little Disciples’ Message

Following the special message, the Little Disciples will come around to collect the “Noisy Offering” in the decorated coffee can. This offering goes toward the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

Hearing the Word of God Proclaimed

Scripture Lesson

Colossians 1:15-28

Sermon offered by Pastor Adam

Responding To The Word Of God

Responsive Hymn

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” #196 *(The United Methodist Hymnal)*

The Congregation Responds

If you feel God is putting something on your heart to share with the congregation after hearing the scripture lesson or sermon, please make your way to the microphone during the final verse of the Responsive Hymn. After we finish the song you are invited to share your testimony, exhortation, story or lesson for 2-3 minutes

Affirmation of Faith #883 *(The United Methodist Hymnal)*

The Prayers of the People and 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 trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

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 of our Time, Talents, Gifts, Resources, Prayers, & Witness

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him all creatures here below;

Praise him above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Going Forth In God’s Mission And Grace

Preparing and Praying over 55th Anniversary Celebration Invitation Postcards

Sending Hymn

“O How I Love Jesus” #170 *(The United Methodist Hymnal)*

Blessing and Benediction

Announcements and Reminders

****Bible Study** meets on Sundays at 9:00am in the Fireside Room

****National Night Out** is Tuesday, August 5 in the Village Park. Once again, Parkview will have a booth at this popular event, and this year we’ll need donations of **juice boxes, Oreo/Nutter Butter/Chips Ahoy cookie packs, and candy** as prizes for the game at our booth. Those items can be brought in during Office Hours, Sunday mornings, or placed in the cooler outside the office/kitchen door.

**** Jesus and Me (JAM) in Sunday School meets at 9:00am** all throughout this summer as we go through the “SCUBA:Diving into Friendship with God” Vacation Bible School curriculum

****Special Parkview Anniversary Sunday** on Sunday, August 17. We will celebrate the 55th anniversary of worshipping in our Sanctuary. We will have a special worship service and then a festive potluck with some special guests! Save the date!

**** “Follow” Parkview on Facebook** by first going to our new page: Parkview United Methodist Church - Turtle Lake, WI

****Youth Group** meets Wednesday starting at 3:30pm

Online Giving or Automatic Withdrawal can be set up through PayPal found on our website or by hovering your smartphone camera over the qr code and clicking on the link.

Last Week’s Offering: \$981.23//Year-to-Date Giving: \$40,063//2025 Budget: \$81,756.50

Let us celebrate the following Birthdays and Anniversaries this week!

Toni Barr (7/21) Dylan O’Connell (7/24) Ross Morton (7/27)



Colossians 1:15-28

¹⁵[Christ Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation,¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

¹⁷He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

¹⁸He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything.

¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

²¹And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²²he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, ²³provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a minister of this gospel.

²⁴I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. ²⁵I became its minister according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶the mystery that has been

hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints.

²⁷To them God chose to make known how great among the gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Imagine reading only one side of a fascinating conversation. That's often what it feels like with the New Testament Epistles.

We possess these incredible letters from early church leaders like Paul, but we lack the letters written to them – the questions, struggles, and challenges from the communities they served.

And that's a genuine shame, because Paul's replies clearly reveal that the early churches grappled with significant problems, wrestling with profound questions in a chaotic world, and desperately needed guidance on living out their faith in Jesus.

Sound familiar? Because in many ways, they were a lot like the Church today.

And so in today's scripture, we read from the first part of Paul's letter to the early Christian church in Colossae and we wonder why it was that Paul needed to remind them of Jesus as not just a personal savior, but the savior of the world.

Why they needed to know that salvation was not just about their individual, heavenly concerns but also the fate of the entirety of creation.

Why Paul felt the need to start out with such a deep and beautiful summary of "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

So today let's take a step back and remember what the New Testament letters actually are, they are words of ancient church missionaries and pastors trying to help real people live out their faith in the real world.

In that way, these letters become a way for us in the here and now to join with the faith and struggles of people long ago and far away, because God is living, active, real and with us.

So let's think about why the Colossians needed a reminder about who Jesus is and what he means for the whole world.

First off, we have to remember that we don't know for certain, because we don't have the letters they would have written to Paul. But what we do have is a lot of scholarly study on what life was like for the Christians in what we now call the nation of Turkey.

They lived on the margins of the Roman Empire, and likely that meant they were on the margins politically, socially and economically. They would have been subjects of the Empire, but most of them were not citizens. That is an important distinction. After all, it is a difficult and dangerous life to live under an empire but without the protections and privileges of citizenship.

And from what we know, the emperors who ruled during those first few decades of the first century were not very empathic, to put it mildly, to the plight and lives of their non-citizens.

Instead, the people living, working, contributing and making up the city of Colassae had to endure heavy taxation and the ever-constant threat of punishment and persecution if they upset the empire. Not living in the way and not believing in the truth decreed by Emperor Caesar very often put your life in danger.

Which makes it all the more amazing that the gospel of Jesus took root in that city.

Becoming a follower of Christ did not put you in higher standing or give you more safety and security. In fact, it immediately made you a target for suspicion.

The Roman Empire officials believed, rightly in fact, that Christians were bad citizens and subjects of the Empire. If you weren't willing to call Caesar lord and the savior of the world, then that meant you were likely to cause all sorts of trouble for the system and those in power.

Paul put himself at great risk preaching that Jesus, and Jesus alone is Lord and Savior. It's quite well documented that he spent quite a bit of time in prison because of his preaching, teaching, and letter-writing.

But fortunately for Paul, he was an actual citizen of the Roman Empire. This meant he was treated with a bit more respect as a political prisoner and was actually able to have direct access to Roman military leaders, governors, and even the elites in the capital in Rome. It's no wonder God chose him, among other reasons, to become one of the first missionaries for Christ and spread the gospel throughout the ancient known world.

But for the Christians in Colossae, a small colony along the trade routes of the ancient world, they weren't so fortunate. They would be foolish to proclaim their faith publicly since it was not the sort of thing the powers that be wanted spreading to others.

Perhaps that helps us better understand why Paul writes what he writes.

He wants them to come back to the hope and truth that they were drawn to in the first place when they started to follow Christ, and not Caesar, as Lord and Savior, their hope and their truth.

As the letter goes on, Paul addresses what scholars call the "Colossian Heresy" in the later chapters. We don't have time to go into that today—which is a plug for 9am Bible study when the group does go deep into the Epistles like this—but keep in mind that a reason a heresy—or false teaching—most often arose in the early church is because people were trying to simplify the mystery of God using existing human philosophy or establish political and social ideologies.

Before Paul gets into addressing the heresies threatening the church in Colassae, he reminds them of the mystery of God that is not so easily explained by human efforts.

Although Jesus lived far away in Israel, although he was a Jewish rabbi, although he was arrested and crucified on a Roman cross, he rose from the dead and his followers made their way to people like the Colossian Christians so they could know that Jesus was the one through whom they can know God.

Know God both in a personal sense, as in to actually understand who God is through a human being that lived and spoke like us, but also know God in a cosmic sense, as in to piece together how God is active in the world in real and powerful ways.

And perhaps the Colossians were like us, in that sometimes we can get so wrapped up in how God is so big, God's ways are so mysterious, God's power is so great that we forget who God is.

So Paul reminds them, the fullness and the mystery of God is revealed to us in the person of Jesus. In how he lived, what he taught and did, and certainly by sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection.

That was just as important in Paul's time as it is in our time. Because it is very easy for people to claim to speak for God and use that to justify all sorts of things from the silly to the wicked. But through Christ, we find out who God really is and what God is truly up to in the world.

And it's clear that Christ had a lot more in common with the people of Colossae than the caesars in Rome.

It's quite a claim for Paul to write, "in [Christ] all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

That would include them and that would include the emperor and everyone in between. That would also include their remote trading outpost on the margins of the known world as well as the very center of ancient human power and prestige and all the lands and creatures beyond.

But Paul also speaks not just of the true power and glory of the crucified Christ, but also of the gospel of reconciliation.

When Paul speaks of reconciliation, he's not referring to political compromises or financial agreements like how that word has been thrown around in news stories a lot this summer.

Instead, Paul is referring to reconciliation as the profound spiritual healing and restoration of relationship with God and with one another, made possible through Christ.

Again, they were likely struggling with the same thing all Christian communities struggle with—how do you actually live out the teachings and ways of

Jesus as a community of faith. It is impossibly hard to actually do the things Jesus invites and commands.

Love and pray for your enemies.

Be among and alongside the poor and oppressed.

Do not try to serve both God and money.

And, of course from the climax of the sermon on the Mount, “Be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect.”

The Colossians realized that they were failing to live up and live out these commandments of Christ. And they felt the weight of separation then from true fellowship and relationship with God and with one another.

And so Paul writes this reminder to them, that it is through Christ, his life, his death, and his resurrection, that God comes to us. That God’s love and grace comes to us and actually transforms the world.

Through Christ, we are reconciled to God and shown the path toward reconciliation with one another.

On their own, on our own, power and efforts we cannot achieve reconciliation, Paul reminds them. But through the grace of the crucified and risen Christ—who is the image and love of God’s very self—reconciliation is offered to us to accept and to live into.

Paul's letter to the Colossians, though written long ago to a struggling community, isn't just an ancient artifact. It's a living word, continually reminding us to lift our gaze from the immediate distractions and anxieties, and see the big picture of God's work in the world.

The Colossians needed to remember that their hope wasn't found in fleeting earthly powers, or in complex human philosophies, but in the all-encompassing supremacy of Jesus Christ. His life, death, and resurrection reveal the very heart of God – a God who is not distant or unknowable, but intimately involved in our lives and powerfully at work in all creation.

And this big picture isn't just theological theory; it's intensely practical. Because when we grasp the 'Christ in you, the hope of glory,' when we understand that in him all things hold together, it changes how we face our own sin and the challenges of living in the world.

It empowers us to live out love, seek justice, and embody reconciliation, not from our own limited strength, but from the boundless grace of the one who is before all things, and in whom all things consist.

Let us, then, embrace this truth, and live, by God's grace, as people reconciled and renewed by Christ, the hope of glory for us and for the world.

It was something the Colossians needed to hear long ago, and it's something we need to hear just as well.

Thanks be to God for the living word we receive this morning. Amen.

