

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David

February 08, 2015



A GENTLE TOUCH

Gathering: *Great is our God and abundant in power, with wisdom beyond our understanding. It is God who numbers all the stars and gives each of them a name, yet bends and heals the broken hearted and binds up all their wounds. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. And also with you.*

Opening Prayer: *Everlasting God, you give strength to the powerless and power to the faint; you raise up the sick and cast out demons. Make us agents of healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creations. Amen.*

Hymn: At evening when the sun had set (1-2)

824

Confession *How can we look at this world and not sing of your praises, O God? The beauty and majesty of the world is overpowering! Yet we have a tendency to take all that you do for us for granted. We treat the world with callous indifference, using its resources carelessly and with little regard to the future. We insist on war as solutions for problems rather than peaceful striving. We turn our backs on people in need, the weak and downtrodden go unnoticed in our midst. We always believe that someone else will care for those in need. How foolish we are, O God! How ignorant we have become! You have given to us all that we need. You have blessed us with the witness of Jesus Christ who came so that we might learn how you would have us live, in honor and peace. Forgive us. Heal our hearts and spirits. Make us fully aware of all our blessings and our responsibilities. Give us again a spirit of joy in serving you. Help us be agents of peace and hope to others. For we offer this prayer in Jesus' Name. AMEN.*

Words of Assurance *(Jesus has come to heal our spirits and our souls. The demons of arrogance, indifference and apathy are being cast out. New life is offered to you in Jesus Christ. Rejoice! Be Glad! For God's love is poured out to you this day. AMEN.*

Hymn: At evening when the sun had set (3-4)

824

Focus Reading

Mark 1:29-39 As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He

answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Hymn: At evening when the sun had set (5-6) 824

Focus Questions 1. How do you think you would have responded if you were Simon's mother-in-law, healed by this stranger?

2. If your church, and the people in it, are "the only Jesus" some people will ever meet, would those people recognize him? Why or why not? 3. Why do you think Jesus had to move on from Capernaum and the crowds? 4. How do you think you would have responded in Simon's situation? How well do you think the followers of Jesus today understand what Jesus was about? 5. What might be the problem with coming to Jesus for healing and seeing him only as a healer?

Reflection by Kate Matthews Huey

In this first chapter, Jesus has been in the wilderness, in a river, in a synagogue, and in a private home. Now he gets up early and goes out to a quiet place, not the wilderness but some place of refuge inside or just beyond the city, and he prays. For a little while, in the quiet dark before dawn, the pace slows. We get the impression, however, that this isn't a time of serene prayer but maybe a time of wrestling and questions, a break in the relentless pace and pressing needs of the crowds, yes, but also a time of wondering about the next step... And so Jesus moves on, and the crowds are left behind, along with the expectations and assumptions of Jesus' disciples... What he "came out to do"--his whole purpose--was to proclaim a message, "the" message: The Reign of God at hand. Jesus will push his disciples, then as now, taking them in new and unexpected directions, moving on in ministry to do what he came out to do, even if it's not the most popular thing to do, even if it's the very thing that will lead to his death.

Hymn: There is a Balm in Gilead 747

Invitation: *Jesus was always the guest. In the homes of Peter and Jairus, Martha and Mary, Joanna and Susanna, he was always the guest. At the meal tables of the wealthy where he pled the case of the poor, he was always the guest. Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people, welcoming the stranger, he was always the guest. But here, at this table, he is the host. Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him; those who want to follow him must first be fed by him; those who would wash his feet must first let him make them clean. For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished; this is the time when Christ can make us new. So come, you who hunger and thirst for a deeper faith, for a better life, for a fairer world. Jesus Christ, who has sat at our tables, now invites us to be guests at his.*

Hymn: All who hunger (1-2) 534

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Celebrating the Sacrament

Hymn: All who hunger (3) 534

Prayer after Communion

We thank you, gracious God, for your gracious gifts. We pray that through these same gifts you will preserve us in faith in you, unite us in your love, and confirm us in the hope of everlasting life, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: May the Lord Bless you 553

My fellow servants, we are one. The bread we share makes us one. The cup we pour makes us one. Even as our dearest sisters and brothers come and go from us, we are one. Even as we scatter from this place to so many diverse pursuits throughout this city, this country, this globe, we are one. With gratitude we share the Table. With gratitude we depart. With gratitude we release one another, trusting in the One who makes us one. Go in peace. May you run and not be weary. May you rise up on the wings of eagles. May you know without doubt that the everlasting God goes with you!