

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David

November 22, 2015

SEEKING THE BLESSED LIFE

Call to worship: *There is no God like our God - who gives strength to the weak, but breaks the power of the mighty; who gives food to the famished, but makes those already full work for their bread; who raises the poor from the dust, but humbles the proud and arrogant. There is no God like our God!*

BLESSED
are you

who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
who are hungry now, for you will be filled.
who weep now, for you will laugh.
when people hate you, and when they exclude you,
revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

Woe
to you

who are rich, for you have received your consolation.
who are full now, for you will be hungry.
who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.
when all speak well of you, for that is what
their ancestors did to the false prophets.

LUKE 6:20-26 (NRSV)

Hymn: Blest are they (vs. 1-2)



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Prayer: *In a world where we are not always good stewards in caring for God's creation, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your world. In a world where a few are living off of the abundance of the land, while the many struggle to make ends meet, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children in need. As globalization makes some wealthier while others join the ranks of the poor, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who are facing poverty. While some have more homes than they need and others are condemned to homelessness, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who have nowhere to lay their head. While statistics show that people in poverty are more likely to end up in prison than in college, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who need guidance. As news reports tell us of people who are eating themselves to death and we turn the page to read of those who are starving to death, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who come to you in need. While many of us have taken for granted and squandered the blessings, gifts, and talents you have given to us, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who do not realize how blessed we truly are. In a world filled with so many people who have lost their way, Lord, open our hearts and help us to be your light that guides them back to you. Amen*

Response: Nothing can Trouble

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In the day of our trouble we will call to you, for you will answer us. When we have done what is wrong and displeasing in your sight, O Lord, extend your love to correct us. When we ignore those in need and pretend that all is right with the world, O Lord, help us to face the truth. When we turn a blind eye to those who have been stricken with poverty and face the injustices that come along with it, O Lord, teach us your way. Enable us to extend your love; and give us an undivided heart, that we may fear your name. We will praise you, O Lord our God, with all our heart; and we will glorify your name forever. Amen.

Hymn: Blest are they (vs. 3-4)

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Scripture Luke 6: 20-23 In Biblical times, the opposite of blessings are curses or woes. If blessings bring happiness to life, curses or woes bring unhappiness. In other words, life can be miserable at

times. If the marriage isn't working out, life can be hell on earth. Our kids can be a pain at certain times and bring great misery. A friend is surprisingly absent when you needed him or her, and you discovered this wasn't a friend after all. You lose your job. Awful. What are you to do now for income? You discover that you can't pay the bills. Your car breaks down. Your body breaks down. Your marriage breaks down. Your plans break down. Life can be filled with all kinds of misery and pain. The Bible called them woes or curses. Sometimes, we feel our marriages are cursed. Sometimes, during an illness or death of a loved one, we feel our lives are cursed. Good times. Bad times. Blessings. Curses. We all feel and experience them all. It is with these images that we approach the gospel of Luke and his account of Jesus' beatitudes for today. We find Jesus offering his disciples his first teachings about life and happiness. (Edward F. Markquart)

"At its heart Jesus wants, as is true for the whole of the gospel, to show us the incredible newness and fundamental otherness of this reality that is the Kingdom of heaven. He wishes to encourage his disciples, wanting them to understand that, although following him might mean going through times of trial, a joy is already present. Hunger and poverty, weeping and hatred are sometimes unavoidable, for also the prophets of the Old Testament faced suffering when they tried to do God's will. But these situations are not the deepest reality; behind this, already just visible, God's Kingdom is present. And so this teaching becomes a life. One that first of all Christ led; he faced all these hardships before the splendor of the resurrection was fully revealed." (Taizé Community)

- How can we accept that following Christ means going through hardships and at the same time believe that God wants us to be happy? In what does true happiness consist?
- Where around us do we see glimpses of the Kingdom of heaven, especially in the midst of difficulties?

Hymn: Blest are they (vs. 5)

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Invitation to the Table: *The Bread we break is the Bread of Life. The Cup we share is the Cup of Promise. These are gifts from God for the people of God. Come and eat. For all is now ready.*

Hymn: Jesus calls us here to meet him (1-2) 528

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise. God of the blessed life...* (continue in prayer) *And now, in Christ, we dare ask: Give us courage to be your people, to show your justice, grace, mercy, peace, and love, and to be a part of your transformation of our world until the day when Christ comes again in peace and we sing your praise and glory forever. Pour out your Holy Spirit... we pray in Jesus name. Amen.*

Hymn: Jesus calls us here to meet him (3) 528

Words of Institution

Hymn: Behold the lamb of God 525

Communion:

Prayer following communion: *The bread has been broken, the cup has been poured, the meal has been shared. Gracious God, we give thanks for bread for the journey, for your wisdom guiding us along the way. May there be friends to share the road as we dare to believe that you walk beside on the journey of life. Amen.*

Hymn: Now to Christ who loved us 554

Sending: *Jesus taught us, "Blessed are the peacemakers." May God grant us the vision, strength, and courage to proclaim God's message of peace whether welcome or unwelcome, for the sake of God's beloved children. May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*