

August 9, 2020 + 10:30 A.M.
Tenth Sunday After Pentecost, Proper 14

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| We Join in Worship |
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PRELUDE *Here I Am, Lord* Schutte/Carter

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Christ's peace is with us always, no matter where we may be. And so, Christ's peace is with each and every one of us in this moment. Let us take it in. Let us really feel it. If able, please stand where you are, look around, and make signs of Christ's peace to each other.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from *Psalms* 105)

Leader: O give thanks to the LORD, call on the LORD's name, make known the LORD's deeds among the peoples.

ALL: **Let us sing to the LORD, let us sing praises; let us tell of all the LORD's wonderful works.**

Leader: Let us glory in the LORD's holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

ALL: **Let us seek the LORD's strength; let us seek the LORD's presence continually. Let us remember the wonderful works the LORD has done: the miracles and the judgments.**

Leader: O offspring of the LORD's servant Abraham, children of Jacob, this is the LORD our God; the LORD's judgments are in all the earth.

ALL: **The LORD is mindful of our covenant forever, of the word that the LORD commanded, for a thousand generations. Let us worship the LORD!**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

Leader: In his letter to the Romans, Paul writes, "No one who believes in God will be put to shame." Therefore, let us confess our sins without fear of shame.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

O God, we confess that we have wronged our fellow siblings, your children. Like Joseph's brothers, we have allowed insecurities, jealousy, and anger to block the tenderness and compassion we should feel according to your example. We have cast blame upon others instead of taking responsibility for ourselves. We have chosen expressions of violence over expressions of love. Forgive us for failing to live into the truth of our shared humanity. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

KYRIE (Instrumental)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! The same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him.

ALL: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!**

GLORIA PATRI: (Instrumental)

***STATEMENT OF FAITH:** (Adapted from *The Confession of 1967*)

ALL: **Out of Israel God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.**

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| We Hear God's Word |
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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: (Unison)

O Lord, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, and strength to follow on the path you set before us; through Jesus Christ, Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON: *Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28*

EPISTLE LESSON: *Romans 10:10-15*

GOSPEL LESSON: *Matthew 14:22-33*

SERMON: Beautiful Are the Feet

MEDITATION TO MUSIC *Children of the Heavenly Father* Wood

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

OFFERTORY INVITATION:

Leader: Paul writes, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" As the Church, we are to be the bearers of good news to the world. Let us give our tithes and offerings so that we can effectively bear the good news of God's love to a world so desperately in need of it! If you are worshiping here today, you can place your offering in the basket as you leave. If you are worshiping remotely, I encourage you to mail in checks or take advantage of our online giving options through the website. Now let us take a moment to reflect on stewardship.

DOXOLOGY (Instrumental)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Unison)

O God, we dedicate these gifts to you and your Kingdom. Guide our feet as we bear the good news of your love to the world. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

We Go Into the World

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Give Thanks

Smith/Wagner

Life of the Church

Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- **BLESSING BOX** – Our Blessing Box has gained even more importance in this season of pandemic. Economic impacts are on the rise, and the most vulnerable in our midst are the most harmed. Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates on food items before donating them.

PRAYER LIST

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| Beth | Jessica |
| Bob Abernethy | Josh Orem |
| Anthony | Mildred |
| Alaina | Jill Muller |
| Marge Ashton | Jeanne Nestor |
| Avery | Karen |
| Bapst Family | Mary & Gary |
| Betsy | Mike Bennett |
| Brady Vanes | MaryAnn Reed |
| Sonny Buono | Rodney |
| Carol Callaway | Calvin Scott |
| Ina Chappell | Sebastian |
| I Sun Chong | Richard Simmons |
| Danielle | Jay Smith |
| Dave | Bonita Sutton |
| Don Dekker | Steve & Melinda |
| Ruth Dekker | Gary Studer |
| George Griner | Tarsha |
| Guy | Richard Terpstra |
| Gracie Helmer | Dennis VanKooten |
| Bill Holmes | Mattie Welch |
| Daniel Litwicki | Cindy Waltz Family |
| Frank | Laura Buono Domsic |
| Kathy Pumnea. | Susan Handley |
| Family of Jeannine Strom | Robert Fozkos Family |
| Family of Thierno Bah | McKnight Family |

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

37 Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an immigrant, the land of Canaan. ²This is the story of the family of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves.⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

¹²Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." ¹⁴So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, ¹⁵and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" ¹⁶"I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." ¹⁷The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." ²¹But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²²Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; ²⁴and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. ²⁸When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

Romans 10:10-15

¹⁰For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

¹⁴But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Matthew 14:22-33

²²Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

²⁸Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” ²⁹He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Beautiful Are the Feet

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28, Psalm 105, Romans 10:10-15, Matthew 14:22-33

Jacob, who became known as Israel after wrestling with God, grew older and had twelve children, their mothers being Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah. Of course you will see that number twelve appearing in the time of Jesus as well. Twelve disciples sat on a boat in the Sea of Galilee watching as a ghost approached...but wait! We'll get there! Let's start with the original twelve: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, and Benjamin. Of these twelve, Joseph, the eleventh-born, was his father's favorite. Who knows why? Perhaps it was because he was the firstborn of Israel's chosen wife, Rachel. Perhaps it was because he also was a dreamer like his father, encountering God in the prophetic world of slumber. Perhaps it was simply because he had a gentle, likeable manner.

Regardless, he was well loved—loved so much, in fact, that his brothers grew jealous as if the love of a parent is a scarce commodity. Israel didn't help matters when he singled Joseph out with a splendid gift, a long robe with sleeves that we have popularly come to imagine as a coat of many colors. That beautiful coat put him in between a rock and a hard place. If he didn't wear it, he risked making his father feel bad. If he wore it, he risked the wrath of his jealous brothers. One day his father called upon him, and so he put on that coat to go into his presence. Perhaps not knowing the extent of their jealousy and wrath, Israel sent his beloved Joseph out to find his brothers and join them in shepherding the flock of sheep in Shechem. And so Joseph got to his feet and began the long walk that would be so consequential to his destiny. He was a prophet, a dreamer, so he probably even knew the challenges that awaited him at the end of that journey. He would be betrayed, attacked, and enslaved at the hands of his brothers. And yet he went. He knew that his destiny was tied to the destiny of the world. As a prophet he knew that he had news that would have to be shared throughout his life. With his words he had lives to save in Egypt. With his words he had reconciliation to enact with his brothers. With his words he had good news for the world. And so he went, on those two feet, one step after another.

Hundreds of years later, another descendant of Israel took to his two feet, one step after another, because he knew that he had good news for the world. He knew that his destiny was tied to the destiny of the world in ways that Joseph couldn't have even imagined. He walked around the countryside of Palestine, perhaps even treading the same ground that his ancient relative Joseph had trod long before. As he walked, he shared the good news that God loved all the people and that God was with the people and that God was bigger than the empires that sought to keep the people down and that God was building a kingdom in which the weak would be made strong and the poor made rich. He walked with the good news that he knew would bring down the full weight of the Roman empire upon his head. A prophet, a dreamer, he walked with the knowledge of all the challenges that awaited him at the end of the journey. He would be betrayed, attacked, and executed by his beloved fellow humans. As he walked around the countryside, multitudes of people also took to their feet and began to follow him, listening to his good news as it was preached in different contexts. The crowds grew and grew, and he needed some space. He sent his twelve disciples out on a boat in the Sea of Galilee while he walked up a mountainside to pray. When he walked back down, he saw that the boat had been blown far away by a buffeting wind. And so he picked up his feet and stepped out onto the roiling water. You see, he had a lesson to teach with those feet. He approached the boat, and as I said before, the twelve disciples thought they saw a ghost.

They cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I! Do not be afraid." When he did so, one of the twelve recognized that his own destiny was tied to the destiny of the world. Looking out upon the water, he finally understood the fullness of who it was walking towards them. This Jesus was not just any man. He was the Son of God. He was the very embodiment of the good news! This disciple

saw that one day he would be called upon to share the good news with the world. He would be the rock upon which the Church would be built—the body that would be tasked with bearing the good news of God’s love until that glorious day when Christ will come again. And so he took a risk. Peter got to his feet and stepped out onto the water, one foot after the other. Fear would get the best of him out upon those roiling waves, but at least he dared to try. Like Joseph of old, like Jesus his lord, he took the steps that would be so consequential for his destiny and for the destiny of the world.

In our reading from *Romans* today, Paul writes, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Beautiful are the feet that take one step after another, knowing that the journey ahead will not be easy. Beautiful are the feet that get dirty and calloused and sore treading upon trails blazed by prophetic ancestors. Beautiful are the feet that risk the roiling waves.

Friends, we are living in a world today that is so desperately in need of the good news of God’s love! People are embittered with jealousy and hatred as they see brothers and sisters taking their beautiful feet to the street to demand justice and liberation. People are lying in broken streets, trying to get to their beautiful feet amid the rubble of explosive destruction. People are going hungry, no longer having the energy to stand up on their beautiful feet. People are becoming more depressed and anxious in isolation from each other, losing the will to get up on those beautiful feet and take even timid steps to front porches.

Friends, like Joseph, like Jesus, like Peter, and like so many other siblings in this good Creation, we need to get up onto our beautiful feet, or use our beautiful hands to move our beautiful chairs, or use our beautiful minds, all to share the good news of God’s love with this world so full of suffering! Maybe that means marching in the streets with today’s prophets and dreamers. Maybe that means taking steps into the virtual sphere and sharing truth and love on embittered newsfeeds. Maybe that means walking to windows or front porches and waving and smiling out at the world. Maybe that means getting up in the morning and deciding that today is another day worth living. Whatever way we can, may we take those brave, bold steps. May we recognize that our destiny is tied to the destiny of the world. May we prophesy and dream. May we bring the good news of God’s love to all! Amen.