

2022-05-15 Mission Sunday

Welcome – Pastor Lois Harder

Good morning! It is good to be together on this beautiful spring morning, when many of us are celebrating accomplishments... awards, promotions and graduations. There is much to be grateful for. And at the same time, we are aware of difficult and troubling things... illness, violence, poverty. And so, we gather to worship God, to re-align our souls and to remember God's faithfulness and our faith in God.

A warm welcome to each one here, in person and on-line – we're very glad that you've joined us. We extend a special welcome to Zane and Joy Unrau! They were married on April the 2nd and they'll be having a reception here in the Fellowship Hall this afternoon.

What items do you bring to share with one another this morning?

- **Senior Coffee** is this Friday afternoon at 2:00 and we'll have the privilege of hearing from Lee and Mary Alice Hertzler about the many places they've lived and served around the world and specifically the congregations they've been apart of.

I'm pleased to welcome Joe Sawatzky here from Goshen, IN. Many of us have already enjoyed the Sunday school hour, delving into some great Bible study and discussion with Joe – we look forward to what he'll bring us now in our worship service as well! Joe and his wife Anna have served with the Mennonite Mission Network in South Africa. Most recently he has served on the Network from the Goshen/Elkhart area and at this time he'll give us a brief update about the work of MMN.

I invite you to join now in the **Call to Worship**, found at number 107, taken from Psalm 146.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help.

Praise the Lord!

Let's pray – O God, hear and accept our praises. Meet us in this place, through this time of worship. Fill us with your Spirit. Nourish us with your hope and assure us of your love. Amen.

Hymn #101, *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns*

Children's Story – Renae Peters

Morning Prayer – there are a couple of additional prayer concerns and praises this morning:

- 1) ElRoy Wiens is home now, recuperating after a series of frightening experiences this past week. He had symptoms that took him to the Neurological ICU of Via Christi, St. Francis hospital where they discovered a brain bleed. After treatment with medication he is tired but on the road to recovery.
- 2) We will pray for baby Haydin Rose Hiebert. She and her parents have been in the pediatric unit at Wesley Hospital since Friday afternoon. The doctors are treating her for a virus and continuing to run scans and tests. This is, of course, scary and stressful with such a tiny baby.

Loving God, thank you for the ways we know and receive your care – through our families and friends, through the joy we share together in good times and the support we receive through tough times. Your Spirit is made known to us in the beauty and order of creation, as we witness the power of storms and the life that the rains bring. Be with those who have experienced destruction from the recent wind storms. God, we thank you for the crops that are growing and the grain being produced as farmers work together with the earth. We ask for your blessing on this collaborative effort.

We thank you God for your gift of covenant love and for the commitment that Zane and Joy have made to you and to one another. Bless them in their marriage and bless the time of celebration that they'll share with friends and loved ones at their reception this afternoon.

We're grateful for the many gifts you've given that we see in our students, for their hard work and accomplishments, for the things that have been learned from books and projects, from experiences and experiments, from mistakes and well executed plans. Help them – and all of us – to rely not on our own understandings, but to trust you completely, God, in all that we do.

Continue to give guidance and energy to those who are planning for VBS and for the Jr Hi camp. May your Spirit be present in preparing the teachers as well as the children.

Dear God, this morning we pray for healing for those who are sick or hurting. We thank you for the medical attention and treatment that was available to ElRoy and for the rest and recovery he's experiencing now. We pray for his return to full health. We pray for Steve and Sandy Banman as Steve continues in his health struggles; grant your healing and strong presence of your Holy Spirit with both of them each day. We pray for baby Haydin and for the doctors who are working with her. God, grant them wisdom and care that they would make full use of every bit of their expertise for her health and well-being. We pray for Courtney and Weston as they comfort and care for Haydin; give them strength as they trust in you. We pray for little Wyatt as he's not able to be with his parents in these days. O God, be with Ann and Myron, with Ron and Patty and with the extended family members as they journey through this difficult time together. We come around them, as their faith community, praying for them and with them. We pray for healing, for comfort, for your peace.

O Lord, we recognize that there is much pain and brokenness in our world. We pray for the people of Buffalo, NY as they grieve the senseless loss of 10 people at the hand of a hate-filled shooter. We continue to pray for the people of Ukraine as war continues to ravage their country. We pray for those who fear for their lives and flee to places unknown in search of safety.

O God, our world is desperate for the transformation that your love brings. Fill us and all of your faithful followers with your love and allow us – lead us – to share it. Give us eyes to see others as you see them, gifted, creative, filled with possibilities for restoration and beauty, so that your kingdom may come here on earth, as it is in heaven. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Benediction –

Bless us as we go, dear God. Use us. Shine your light through us that those we meet would know your love.