

First United Methodist Church of Elgin

January 31, 2021

Prelude

Dr. Mindy Pugh

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

R. Haan

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Felicia LaBoy

Announcements

Cindy Palm, Lay Servant

Call to Worship

Cindy Palm, Lay Servant

If someone loves God, they are known by God.

Love God and trust that you are known by God.

God knows us to the core of our being,
and loves us through all our days, through all our ways.

Prepare to be amazed again at God’s teachings,
for God’s teachings are amazing still.

Prepare to discover wisdom,
for God’s word is full of wisdom and truth.

Opening Hymn

“Mighty to Save”*

B. Fielding & R. Morgan

Meghan Weber, accompanied by Matthew Weber

Prayer

Cindy Palm, Lay Servant

Holy Father, we are given power and opportunity to transform others with acts of love and grace. When we cry out with words that hurt, silence our cries, and speak gently through our words. When we act in ways that hurt, even when help is intended, transform our hurtful actions with your grace. When we forget that we are loved and called to love, love us back into your likeness, that your love might flow freely through us and bring your love to the world. We pray this in the name of your Son Jesus, who taught us to pray saying...

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, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

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Offertory

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”*

The Faith We Sing #2174

Sung by Debbie Potts, Karen Werth, Matthew Weber, Duane Werth

Accompanied by Dr. Mindy Pugh

Ways to Give:

Mail your tithes and offerings to:

First UMC Elgin
216 E. Highland Ave.
Elgin IL 60120

Give Online:

Visit the Online Giving page on the First UMC Elgin website @ fumcelgin.org/give or visit paypal.me/fumcelgin

Scripture Reading

Cindy Palm, Lay Servant

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 (MSG)

¹⁻³The question keeps coming up regarding meat that has been offered up to an idol: Should you attend meals where such meat is served, or not? We sometimes tend to think we know all we need to know to answer these kinds of questions—*but* sometimes our humble hearts can help us more than our proud minds. We never really know enough until we recognize that God alone knows it all.

⁴⁻⁶Some people say, quite rightly, that idols have no actual existence, that there's nothing to them, that there is no God other than our one God, that no matter how many of these so-called gods are named and worshiped they still don't add up to anything but a tall story. They say—again, quite rightly—that there is only one God the Father, that everything comes from him, and that he wants us to live for him. Also, they say that there is only one Master—Jesus the Messiah—and that everything is for his sake, including us. Yes. It's true.

⁷In strict logic, then, nothing happened to the meat when it was offered up to an idol. It's just like any other meat. I know that, and you know that. But knowing isn't everything. If it becomes everything, some people end up as know-it-alls who treat others as know-nothings. Real knowledge isn't that insensitive.

We need to be sensitive to the fact that we're not all at the same level of understanding in this. Some of you have spent your entire lives eating “idol meat,” and are sure that there's something bad in the meat that then becomes something bad inside of you. An imagination and conscience shaped under those conditions isn't going to change overnight.

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Scripture Reading continued

Cindy Palm, Lay Servant

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 (MSG)

⁸⁻⁹But fortunately God doesn't grade us on our diet. We're neither commended when we clean our plate nor reprimanded when we just can't stomach it. But God *does* care when you use your freedom carelessly in a way that leads a fellow believer still vulnerable to those old associations to be thrown off track.

¹⁰For instance, say you flaunt your freedom by going to a banquet thrown in honor of idols, where the main course is meat sacrificed to idols. Isn't there great danger if someone still struggling over this issue, someone who looks up to you as knowledgeable and mature, sees you go into that banquet? The danger is that he will become terribly confused—maybe even to the point of getting mixed up himself in what his conscience tells him is wrong.

¹¹⁻¹³Christ gave up his life for that person. Wouldn't you at least be willing to give up going to dinner for him—because, as you say, it doesn't really make any difference? But it *does* make a difference if you hurt your friend terribly, risking his eternal ruin! When you hurt your friend, you hurt Christ. A free meal here and there isn't worth it at the cost of even one of these "weak ones." So, never go to these idol-tainted meals if there's any chance it will trip up one of your brothers and sisters.

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Dr. Felicia LaBoy

Meditation

Dr. Mindy Pugh

"When Thou Art Near"*

J. S. Bach

But to us there is but one God, the Father,
of whom are all things, and we in him;

and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom
are all things, and we by him.

1 Corinthians 8:6

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Sermon

Rev. Dr. Felicia LaBoy

Power & Authority Mark 1:21-28 (CEB)

²¹ Jesus and his followers went into Capernaum. Immediately on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and started teaching. ²² The people were amazed by his teaching, for he was teaching them with authority, not like the legal experts. ²³ Suddenly, there in the synagogue, a person with an evil spirit screamed, ²⁴ “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the holy one from God.”

²⁵ “Silence!” Jesus said, speaking harshly to the demon. “Come out of him!” ²⁶ The unclean spirit shook him and screamed, then it came out.

²⁷ Everyone was shaken and questioned among themselves, “What’s this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands unclean spirits and they obey him!” ²⁸ Right away the news about him spread throughout the entire region of Galilee.

Closing Hymn

“It Is Well With My Soul”*

United Methodist Hymnal #337

Matthew Weber, accompanied by Jonathan Besancon

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Felicia LaBoy

Response

“As We Go”*

Worship & Song #3183

Laura Johnson, accompanied by Jonathan Besancon

Postlude

Dr. Mindy Pugh

“With Trumpets and Horns”*

G. F. Handel

**All musical selections were previously recorded following strict Covid-19 protocols. Thank you to all of our talented singers and accompanists for their contributions to our services.*