

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 23rd, 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

Pastor.....Dawn E. Volpe
Music Director.....Colin Welford
Lay Reader.....Betty Chomeau
MusiciansAngela Sherman, Molly Rhode, & Harald Halvorsen



Order of Service

“Sanctus”..... Gabriel Fauré

Welcome and Announcements

Watchword for the Week: Do not be conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

Reflection

Hymn #771: “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”

Prayers of the Church/Lord’s Prayer

“Shine”..... Arr. Jenny Garlock

Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 51: 1- 6
Romans 12: 1 - 8

Sermon

“Grown-up Christmas List”..... Foster & Jenner

Benediction

“The Flight of the Bumblebee”..... N. Rimsky-Korsakov

Hymn: “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness
No merit of my own I claim but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

Refrain: *On Christ, the solid rock, I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand.*

When darkness veils His lovely face I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.
(Refrain)

His oath, His covenant, His blood, sustain me in the raging flood
When all supports are washed away He then is all my hope and stay.
(Refrain)

When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found
Clothed in His righteousness alone, redeemed to stand before the throne.
(Refrain)

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Reflection: Be Transformed: Romans 12: 1-8

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world,” Paul wrote to the Romans from Corinth, a Greek port city. Salty air, noisy trade markets, and interesting architecture embellished with images of mythic gods like Poseidon ... this was Paul’s Corinth. Prompted by a revelation (Act 18: 9, 10), he stayed in Corinth for eighteen months preaching boldly, especially to the lower caste. The church in Corinth grew.

From this context, Paul writes his friends in Rome reminding them to live into redemption by sacrificing their bodies, meaning their minds, souls, and physical selves. Each person has “different gifts” that are no greater and no less than others’ gifts. Paul instructs all of us to “be transformed” – curiously, not to transform ourselves – but *be transformed* through relationship with the living God.

It’s a radical world view in twenty-first century America. Paul seems to be asking us to live a kind of counterculture lifestyle. Our roles in community are to be shaped by the Holy Spirit and expressed with authentic humility, self-sacrifice, and service. Is he saying that individualism is not how we are called to live?

One of my favorite quotes is from George Harrison, himself a contradictory blend of wealth, generosity, self-awareness, and precarious choices. “Sometimes I feel like I’m actually on the wrong planet,” he quipped. “It’s great when I’m in my garden, but the minute I go out the gate I think, ‘What am I doing here?’”

Perhaps puttering in the garden is okay, for it allows us to reflect with “sober judgment” on why we have been placed in this moment in time, and what our purpose today might be. For each one of us is called to push open the garden gate. If we don’t, it will surely be yanked wide open for us! We are called to a Spirit-driven life, to worship God daily through humble, sacrificial living. We’re called to live lives that honor God, not the blessings (wealth, talents, etc.) he’s given us.

–Kathleen Harris

Sources: <https://www.facebook.com/PBPres/videos/674691786723395> and https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4563

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Ephraim Moravian Church [worship@ephraimmoravian.org](mailto:worship@ephraimmoravian.org)  
P.O. Box 73, Ephraim, WI 54211 920-854-2804