

# Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

June 21, 2020

Father's Day

## Ringing of the Bell

**Welcome and Announcements** Pastor Eric Hoey

**Organ Prelude** Kristin Jones, Director of Music

### \*Call to Worship Bob Clum

God cares for us completely  
and calls for our total commitment.

**Christ gave his life that we might live  
and calls us to give our lives to him.**

Through Christ we have died to sin;  
in Christ we are fully alive to God.

**Come, let us worship God.**

### \*Hymn PH 288 "I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

1 I sing the mighty power of God  
That made the mountains rise;  
That spread the flowing seas abroad  
And built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained  
The sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at God's  
command,  
And all the stars obey.

2 I sing the goodness of the Lord  
That filled the earth with food;  
God formed the creatures with a word  
And then pronounced them good.

Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed,  
Where'er I turn my eyes;  
If I survey the ground I tread,  
Or gaze upon the skies!

3 There's not a plant or flower below  
But makes Thy glories known;  
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,  
By order from Thy throne;  
While all that borrows life from Thee  
Is ever in Thy care,  
And everywhere that we can be,  
Thou, God, art present there.

### \*Call to Confession

Sin destroys our lives. Sin destroys our relationships. Sin destroys our hope. But through faith in the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our lives, our relationships, and our future are no longer enslaved to sin. Let us trust the love of God and confess our sin, that we might receive grace and find true freedom.

### \*Prayer of Confession (unison)

**God of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, God of Hagar and Ishmael, who gave us your Son, Jesus Christ the crucified, send your Holy Spirit to help us confess and truly repent of our sins. We turn against one another; we fail to care for the weak and poor among us. We pay no heed to the cries of the powerless; we seek our own advantage. Your Son emptied himself upon a Roman cross and revealed your eternal, self-giving love. Forgive us, merciful God. Wipe sin from our lives and**

**let us find ourselves wholly in Jesus Christ, our Savior. It is in his name that we pray. Amen.**

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

God, who loves us, does not abandon or forsake us. Our Savior hears and answers when we cry out from the wastelands of sin. Death cannot bind us, for the risen Christ sets us free. Hear the good news: in Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

**\*Passing the Peace**

Rather than going around the room and shaking hands, for the Passing of the Peace, turn and bow to someone out of respect and love— “The peace of Christ be with you”

**\*Gloria Patri (PH 579)**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

**Prayer for Illumination**

O God, you have the power to make a desert a place of renewal and a cross a sign of redemption. Send your Holy Spirit so that we can hear you and entrust ourselves completely to you, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

**First Reading** Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication. In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me.

There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.

Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant; save the child of your serving girl. Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

**Special Music** Wayne Jones, soloist

**Second Reading** Luke 15:11-31

Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need.

So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.'

## **Children's Sermon**      Kristin Jones

### **SERMON**      "Fatherhood of God"

Luke 15:11-31

- I would imagine the greatest moment of pride is when you see your own children have their first child, right?
- If you are high-tech you have those picture frames that your family can send updated pictures as the You see dad smiling from ear to ear in all the pictures of their growing family.
- Did you know, underneath the smiling, joyous exterior of the Father is a clueless, man who has no idea how to be a father let alone how to change a diaper?
- When the son left the hospital room with his new family, the hospital gives them a free pack of diapers, blankets, booties, ski cap, couple of XXsmall t-shirts.
- But did you know, they do not give an instruction manual on how to care and raise a child?
- I have done it four times, and never got a manual on how to be a great dad
- In my day, I came across these two very important books. [click]
- "Parenting for Dummies" and the Daddy book, "Being a Great Dad"
- I know, I know, all you have to do today is go to YouTube and learn everything you need on being a great father.

- But the only other place my generation and all the generations before learned how to be a good dad was from the example of our own father.
- But often times our fathers were less than perfect.
- Maybe some of you have horrendous memories with your father, and modeling after his life is the last thing you even would want to do!
- So is YouTube the answer?
- How does a person really learn from the model of an excellent Father?
- In Scripture, there are some principles, but no detailed manual how to be the best parent you can ever offer to a child.
- However, when a person looks at the fatherhood qualities of God, I am amazed at the wealth of insight we could learn by simply modeling after God and His providential care for His children.
- A place to begin to learn about the fatherhood of God, this morning I propose to you, the story of the prodigal son.
- It is common understanding that in this parable, the father represents God, the prodigal symbolizes the lost, the elder brother symbolizes the self-righteous leadership of the Pharisees and Scribes.
- If Jesus directly uses the father figure to represent God the father, then looking at the life of the father in this story, I believe reveals some basic and universal insights on the Fatherhood of God.

### **1. God Provides For His Family** (v. 11-12)

*Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them.*

- Here is an important fact.
- The father had an estate that someday could go to the children.
- This demonstrates an important quality of the fatherhood of God: God has the ability to provide and take care of His own children.
- Throughout Scripture this is affirmed
- *Matt. 6:25-26 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? [click]*
- This text is a part of Jesus' teaching that God provides for our basic needs therefore we do not have to chase after the "God of money" to fulfill all your dreams.
- Going back to the story of the prodigal son, also note that when the son makes this request from the father, he is insulting the father by saying, "I wish you were dead!....So that I can have my share of your estate"
- Because of the disrespect towards the father had every legal right to have the son beaten, and give him absolutely nothing.
- But in the provisionary, fatherhood side of God, he does something that would make first century listeners, say "I cannot believe this!"
- So the father **radically** and **abundantly** provides for his son
- This brings me to the application side of the provision of God, Father's must be able to provide for their children both materially and emotionally.
- What breaks my heart is to hear stories of fathers who do not provide for their families.

- Henderson has the highest parental incarceration rate in the country.
- Parents often need to think twice about the consequences to their children and how it would effect the children if they become arrested and go to jail.
- Absent fathers put the pressure on the spouse or grandparents to provide income for the children.
- Single mothers carry a great responsibility to raise families by themselves because of an absent or non-existent father.
- Children who are making poor choices, need their fathers all the more to provide for them.
- ILL: In 2003, Hurricane Isabel slammed into the East Coast of the United States, lashing North Carolina and Virginia, then moving northward all the way to Canada, leaving 16 dead and cutting power to six million homes. The edges of the hurricane passed through Washington, D.C., prompting the president and members of Congress to find safer quarters.
- That was not the case at Arlington National Cemetery, where guards have relentlessly stood vigil at the Tomb of the Unknowns every hour of every day since July 1, 1937. When the hurricane hit, the soldiers remained at their posts even though they were given permission to seek shelter.
- That's what a soldier does. He acknowledges the storm, but he doesn't give in to it. He stands firm.
- If these men can stand guard over the dead, how much more important is it that the Father stand guard over the living—his wife and children and not abandon his post as the provider?

## **2. God Allows His Children To Choose Their Own Path** (vv. 13-16)

*"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.*

- The son takes everything the father offers to him, and leaves the protective and caring custody of his father, and does what he wants.
- The son eventually goes completely broke.
- I like how Luke underscores that fact that away from the protective and caring custody of the father "but no one gave him anything."
- Now if you were the father of the son, would you let him go
- Knowing that this request is probably the most foolish thing the son had ever requested?
- Knowing that you worked very hard to provide for the family and you see the son take this selfish-foolish action, and that your son had the potential of losing one third to one half of your entire estate.
- Was the father being completely foolish?
- The lesson to learn here, is that the Fatherhood of God allows His children to choose their own path.
- As God's child, you have the free choice to rebel or to align yourselves with the very heart of God.
- God loves us enough to make our own choices.

- God did not make us to be wind-up toys that simply responded to God's every whim or desire, but God instilled in us the ability to choose our own path.
- Q: Do you think God would allow us to go down a certain path if it would cause direct harm to us?
- I don't think so.
- The Fatherhood of God allows his children choose their own path.
- Obviously we would not allow our children to make choices that would bring harm or scar them for the rest of their lives!?
- Neither would God the Father.
- If you think about it, this is probably one of the hardest aspects of being parenting, when do you let go of your adult child and let them make their own decisions.
- Notice the father did not say, "Until you can prove to me that you can be responsible for all that money!"
- Somehow the father in this story, agreed to the child's request (foolish or not), and granted it by allowing him to choose his own path.
- I appreciate that God allows to make our own decisions and to make our own failures.
- We must show the same quality to our children.

### **3. God Does Not Burn Bridges (vv. 17-20)**

*"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' 20 So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him*

- As I read this story, I am amazed that the son had the courage to even think of facing his father again.
- But out of deep desperation, he comes back to the father.
- This tells me that the father not only allowed his son to come back, but made sure that he did not prevent him from coming back.
- In fact the text tells us that the father actually saw him a long way off.
- This tells me the father actually was hoping his son would come back.
- Looking at the text, I wonder how many times the father would scan the horizon in deep hopes that his son would some day return home.
- You see, if the father would have cursed his son, told him that he was crazy, and fostered prideful bitterness against his son, "Don't ever come back here. You will never be welcome!"
- If the father carried that posture, he would have burned any kind of connection to his son
- But the father, deep down, had always cared and loved his son even if it was to allow him to do his own thing.
- The father always left a door open for renewal and restoration.
- He did not take opportunity to burn bridges.
- EX: I seen in families such deep hatred and hurt, where people vowed never to see or speak to a certain family member again!
- That is burning a bridge.

- However, the father in this story demonstrates to us that there is nothing we can do to stop the unconditional love God has for us.
- Not matter how much sin is a part of our lives, our heavenly Father loves us.
- Would't that be a great parenting principle?
- Telling our children, no matter what you do, however foolish, selfish, or angers us, "Nothing you do will ever cause me to stop loving you because you are my precious child, and I love you!"
- I think our children need to hear this everyday.
- No matter how much you feel you mess up, I love you because God does the same to me.
- ILL: There's an old story about the 20th century violin virtuoso, Fritz Kreisler. It animates an important point.
- Setting out from Hamburg, Germany, one day to give a concert in London, violinist Fritz Kreisler had an hour before his boat sailed. He wandered into a music shop, where the proprietor asked if he might look at the violin Kreisler was carrying. He then vanished and returned with two policemen, one of whom told the violinist, "You are under arrest." "What for?" asked Kreisler. "You have Fritz Kreisler's violin." "I am Fritz Kreisler," protested the musician. "No you're not. Come along."
- As Kreisler's boat was sailing soon, there was no time for prolonged explanations. Kreisler asked for his violin and played a piece he was well known for.
- Now are you satisfied? He asked."
- The policemen let the musician go because he had done what only Fritz Kreisler could do.
- In the same way, if we could be known to love our children the way God loves us, the bridges we build into each other's lives could never be broken.
- Open communication of a loving environment will NEVER burn bridges between Fathers and their children.

#### **4. God Does Not Condemn His Children (vv. 20b-24)**

*... and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. 21 "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.*

- How does the father respond to the repentant son?
- First of all, he did not seem to hear the whole apology.
- The father was so excited to the return of his son, he immediately began ordering preparations to celebrate his return
- We clearly see in these verses the action of father: 1. compassion for him, 2. ran to him, 3. hugged him, and 4. kissed him. (This was unheard of for this time and place)
- The father was so glad to see the son, he did not want to hear his apology or appeal, but simply wanted to celebrate his return home.
- Not once in this story do you see the father curse the son, humiliate him, or even say, "I told you so!!!!!"

- Comments like that are based upon selfish pride.
- But the son only heard the complete joy of the Father.
- The action of offering the robe, the ring, and the sandals all signify restoration.
- You see, God never condemns us for our failures
- When we have the humility to come back, God will show us his love in extravagant ways.
- In the same way, as fathers, we must not condemn our children no matter how much they have hurt us or upset us.
- We must fight the temptation to lecture, shame, place blame.
- Why? Because when we do, you will find the motivation is pride.
- Remember 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 *Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.*

### **5. God Loves His Children Equally (vv. 25-31)**

*25 "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 27 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' 28 "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 31 "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"*

- The older son misinterprets his father's intent of celebration.
- The son also has been working to earn the father's love because he is expecting a rewards based relationship with his father.
- But the father is so concerned with the restoration of the relationship he says, "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"
- The Fatherhood of God plays no favorites.
- God is more concerned with the relationship he has with you than all the fringe benefits that go along with it.
- A relationship with God is not about membership benefits.
- This situation is about the relationship that was once broken and now restored
- In the same way, a father must love his children equally and not play favorites.

1. God Provides For His Family (v. 11-12)
2. God Allows His Children To Choose Their Own Path (vv. 13-16)
3. God Does Not Burn Bridges (vv. 17-20)
4. God Does Not Condemn His Children (vv. 20b-24)
5. God Loves His Children Equally (vv. 25-31)

### **Offering**

Christ knows every breath we take: each one is a gift from the Spirit. God watches over, protects, and provides for us. Let us present our offerings of thanksgiving for the goodness of the triune God.

**\*Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessing flow. Praise Him all creatures here below.  
Praise him above the heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

Holy One, incarnate One, dynamic One, God who is Trinity, we lift our voices in praise and thanksgiving for the life in Christ Jesus that we receive from you. You have shown that your mercy overcomes sin and evil and brings relief from oppression. We thank you for your steadfast love that keeps covenant with your people. In Christ we know the depth of your care for all that you create. We invite the Holy Spirit to help us so that we can praise you eternally in the name of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**\*Affirmation of Faith** (Book of Common Worship)

**Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess to the glory of God: Jesus Christ is Lord! Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

God of our ancestors, you are the God of our future. You showed mercy to Hagar and Ishmael in the desert, just as you answered Sarah's laughter with Isaac's birth. We pray that you heal the deathly divisions between all peoples of the earth today. We pray that the church of Jesus Christ will be so filled with the Holy Spirit, so committed to the head of the church that we will have Christ's mind among us. May the sword of the Word pierce our hearts and give us compassion for a suffering world. We pray for world leaders and diplomats who seek to make peace among nations. May their success be measured in generations who live free from fear of war. We pray for medical professionals committed to healing, especially those in areas of poverty or violence. May they be guided and guarded by the Spirit who lifts up the brokenhearted and even raises the dead. We pray for teachers, school staff and administrators, and students, especially those in high-risk communities. May they find strength in you to reach beyond themselves and so embrace the future with the hope that you are holding for them. We pray for your promised kingdom to come, when all wars will cease, and there will be no disease; when courageous faith, hope, and love cast out hatred and poverty. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our savior, redeemer, and friend.

**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.

**\*Hymn** PH 293 "This is My Father's Word"

1 This is my Father's world,  
And to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings  
The music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world:  
I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and  
seas;  
His hand the wonders wrought.

2 This is my Father's world.  
Oh, let me ne'er forget  
That though the wrong seems oft so  
strong,  
God is the ruler yet.  
This is my Father's world:  
The battle is not done:  
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,  
And earth and heaven be one.

**\*Benediction**

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace both now and evermore.

**\*Organ Postlude** (please be seated for the postlude)