

August 20, 2023—10:00am
Series: Won't You Be My Neighbor

Service of Worship
Week 1: Be My Neighbor

First Presbyterian Church
Cedar Falls, IA

UNITE IN LOVE

Introduction "Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

Welcome Rev. Julie Erkel Hagee

Prelude Phil Batchelder

Call to Worship Jeverna Mulligan

One: God calls us to be together as neighbors in faith:

ALL: to celebrate those who came before us

One: to be in community with those around us

ALL: and to care for those who will come after us

One: With joy and thanksgiving, let us be good neighbors.

ALL: With joy and thanksgiving, let all things praise the Lord!

Gathering Hymn 37 "Let All Things Now Living" *all verses*

GROW IN FAITH

Time for Wonder *children are invited forward*

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 John 4:7-21

Reflection on the Word *Won't You Be My Neighbor*

The Word in Song "Christ, You Offer Us Your Welcome" *all verses*
Tune: BEACH SPRING (716 God Whose Giving Knows No Ending)

1. Christ, you offer us your welcome; it's a precious gift you give!
You bring reconciliation and you show us how to live.
You call poor ones from their sadness, you call rich ones from their pride.
You call people who are outcast, telling all to "Come inside!"
2. In a world that's often fearful, where so many stand alone,
you invite us to your table and you welcome people home.
Then you point us to the strangers that, it seems, nobody sees,
and you say, "These are your neighbors. I am here, in each of these."

3. You have given us a mission — to invite our neighbors in — and your call to love and listen is a place we can begin. We need more than open houses; we need, first, to give our hearts. By your Spirit, make us servants; that's the way your welcome starts.
4. May we set a welcome table, may we find a common ground where no one will feel they're labeled, where acceptance can be found. We don't need to entertain there, or to do things that impress — just to hear folks' joy and pain there, and to love so all are blest.
5. Christ, your call to offer welcome is an urgent, mighty call; you have given us a vision of your Way that welcomes all. May we seek to meet our neighbors in their vast diversity. As your loved and welcomed people, may we build community.

Invitation to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**Merciful Lord, we confess how easily we lose hope.
 You promise us your yoke is easy, but we carry it heavily.
 We treat our callings as burdens, not gifts.
 Lighten our loads; lighten our hearts.
 Teach us to rejoice in you,
 and to trust always
 in your steadfast, powerful,
 and unwavering love.**

Quiet Reflection

Assurance of Grace

One: Friends and neighbors, hear the good news:
 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out all fear.
 God gives us perfect love and leads us into life. Receive and share the good news:
ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and made whole, thanks be to God.

Response to Grace 659

“Know That God is Good”

all verses

REACH OUT TO OTHERS

Litany of Gifts

One: There are different gifts,
ALL: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.
 One: There are different ways of serving God,
ALL: But it is the same Lord who is served.

One: God works through different people in different ways,

ALL: But it is the same God who achieves purpose through them all.

One: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit,

ALL: To use it for the common good.

One: Together we are the body of Christ,

ALL: And individually members of him.

Presentation

Ordination Questions of Elders and Deacons

Pastor Julie

Questions of the Congregation

Do we, the members of the church, accept Jean Boller, Cyd Grafft, and Kevin Thedens as Elders, and do we accept Jill Mortenson, Jane Seeley, Jim Seeley, and Susan Weinberg as deacons, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ? Answer: **“We do.”**

Do we agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is the head of the church? Answer: **“We do.”**

Prayer & Pronouncement

Offering Invitation & Dedication

Gifts may be given online at firstprescf.org

Prayers of the People

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Creator in heaven, holy is your name, your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Our Life Together

Sending Litany

One: Once we were strangers,

ALL: now we are friends.

One: God calls us to neighbor

ALL: May we go and do likewise

Sending Hymn 745

“Now Go in Joy”

all verses

Blessing

Postlude