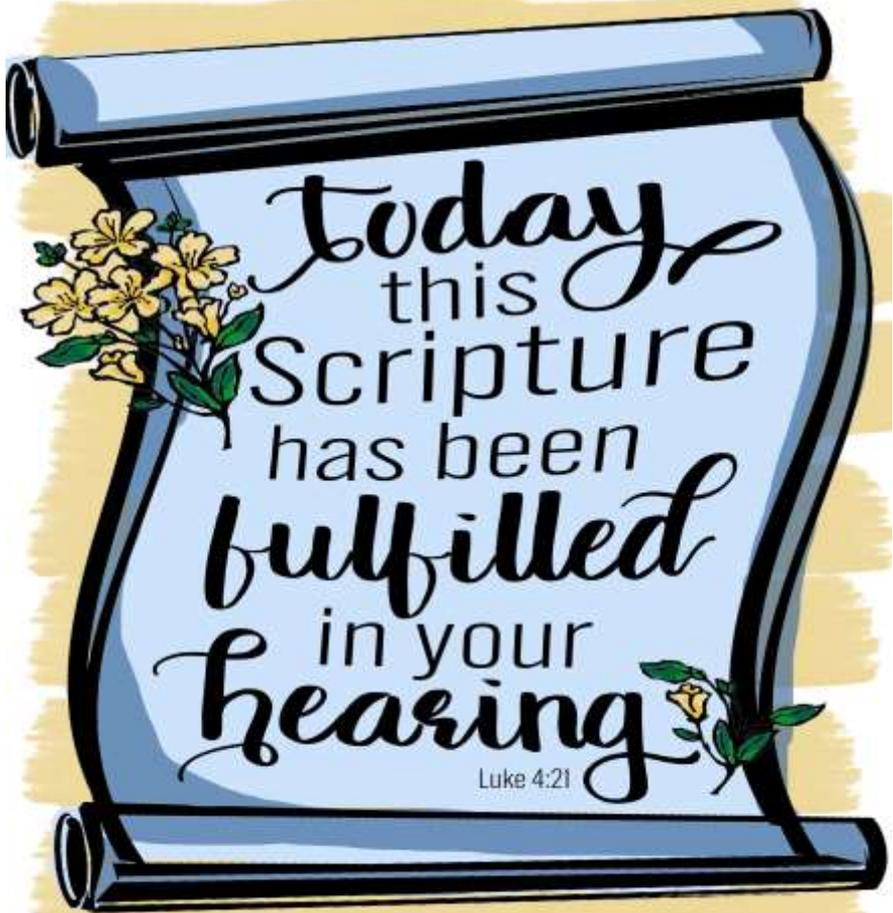


Faith Presbyterian Church

*Christians growing in Faith by caring,
connecting, & serving community*



**CELEBRATING GOD’S LOVE ON THE THIRD
SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

January 23, 2022

GOD’S PEOPLE GATHER

CHIMES

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Winds blow, rains fall, storms rage,

God is our strength and sanctuary.

Floods rise, waves batter, wars ravage,

God is our strength and sanctuary.

Violence threatens, hunger abounds, diseases flourish,

God is our strength and sanctuary.

**All: We are safe here in this holy place, for God’s
sustaining and nourishing Spirit surrounds and affirms
us.**

OPENING PRAYER

**God of all wisdom and majesty, holy is your name. Great
are you, Lord, and greatly to be praised, for you are the
architect and engineer of all that is and all that ever will be.
The seasons and times you hold in your hand. We
acknowledge our total dependence on you for every breath
we take. Enfold us in your redeeming grace. Give us vision
and hope for the renewing of your creation. We pray in
Christ's name. Amen.**

*HYMN #485

“To God Be the Glory”

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One, we confess today that we are weary, and we often believe we are alone. We have taken our eyes off you. Rather than setting our sights on Jesus, rather than determining our priorities through our faith, we have allowed ourselves to be led by the values of the world. Forgive us for our lack of faith. Help us to turn back to you -- the source of our existence and our strength -- trusting in your providence, confident you will carry us in times of sorrow, assured you will provide all the strength we need. Amen.

A TIME OF QUIET/PERSONAL CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON

*RESPONSE "Glory to God"

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me.

And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me.

And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you.

Please share a sign of God's peace- a nod of greeting, a wave of hello, a bow wishing your neighbors God's peace, God's Shalom.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27-31(p.813)

SPECIAL MUSIC

GOSPEL READING

Luke 4:14-21(p.727)

SERMON

“In the Power of the Spirit”

A little girl had just gotten out of her Sunday School class and was walking home with her mother. Her mother asked her what she had learned. The little girl said, “well, we learned about Jesus and how he was a teacher and how he would teach people wherever he went, on a mountain, or down by the water, or in a synagogue which was his church. But what I really want to know is, did God write the Bible all by himself? Or did God have some Holy Ghost writers?”

That’s a really good question. People who go to seminary love to try to answer it. Who wrote the Bible? When was it written? Why was it written? And how did it all get put together? These are maybe not burning questions in your brain. If they were, you probably would have ended up in seminary like I did. I ended up in seminary because I was trying to find the meaning of life. Seminary is an expensive way to figure it out though. Yet even before I got there, I had the gist of it, rooted right there in the grace of God. The Gospel is the best thing going on this planet. And we certainly need a best thing. I was talking to someone a couple of days ago who said she asked her five grandchildren, all between 18-28, where they find hope. Only one of them said they had hope for the future. This is heart-breaking.

How do we share the good news with those who have lost hope, no matter how old they are? We listen, listen, listen. Listen to where they’re coming from, listen to their concerns. And learn from them too. It’s a give and take. Nobody has all the answers, and the Bible is a mystery to most people today. It’s hard to know how to approach the

Bible, and so you end up with an all or nothing approach. Either the Bible is infallible and perfect, kind of like a rule book, or the Bible is irrelevant and so no need to pay attention to it. It's just an old book that was written a long, long time ago. I like to try to find the happy medium between those two approaches. It takes a strong commitment of thought and energy and time to learn how to read the Bible well and come to understand how rich it is and how much it can help us with today's challenges.

Today is a new day and a new opportunity to let God's love shine through us. This story is Luke's version of the beginning of Jesus' ministry; just like Jesus changing water into wine is the gospel writer John's way of telling us that Jesus' public ministry had begun. Verse 14 tells us that *Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit...* so where was he the day before? According to Luke's gospel, he was out there in the wilderness being tempted by the devil. Once he had "passed the test," so to say, he was ready to begin his ministry in public. And he does that by teaching in the synagogues and everybody praised him. At this point, he's just another very popular rabbi. He's an itinerant teacher and there were a lot of those back then. They would walk from town to town and crowds would gather and listen to what they had to say.

But Jesus is a little bit different already. He stands out from the crowd with those six words Luke uses to describe him. He returned *in the power of the Spirit*. Not just any spirit, but Spirit with a capitol S, as in the Holy Spirit. What do you think that means? Is he any different now than he was the week before? I think so. Luke tells us in Chapter 3 that Jesus was 30 years old when he began his ministry. Before then he had some sense of who he was though. Remember the story of 12-year-old Jesus in the temple? Luke wrote that one

also. In Chapter 2, Jesus leaves his parents and goes to the temple where he sits “*among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.*” The last we hear of him in his youth is that he “*grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*” Fast forward 18 years, Jesus is baptized by John, and then tempted by the devil. And that brings us to today’s story.

Each of the four gospels tells things a bit differently, especially John’s gospel, which is very different from Mark, the shortest gospel, Matthew and Luke. Luke was most likely well-educated, perhaps a doctor and a friend of the apostle Paul. He was a Gentile, and his book is aimed at a non-Jewish audience. He sees Jesus as having a universal mission for all people, not just the Jewish people. He is concerned about the poor, the outcasts and women, all of whom lived hard lives on the margins of society.

So how can this story speak to us today? A couple of thoughts. Jesus began his ministry confident of the power of the Holy Spirit. So we ask ourselves, are we confident in the power of the Holy Spirit? When we got out of bed this morning, were we walking with the Holy Spirit? I don’t mean anything wild or crazy, although the Holy Spirit could prompt us in that direction. I mean a basic, deep down, gut feeling that we’re walking with God. There’s so much going on today, I don’t know how we navigate all of it without feeling the power of the Spirit. What helps you in your daily walk? Prayer, a daily devotion, a holy conversation, a cup of tea and an inspiring book, a walk outside? Or how about music? I try to sit down and play piano for half an hour a day and listen for the Holy Spirit in the music.

I don’t know if there was music in the synagogue that day Jesus was there, but the words he read from that scroll are

just like music. They speak to that deep, hopeful place inside all of us. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”* It was Jesus’ custom to be there at the synagogue. So we ask ourselves, what’s our custom? How do we shape our days? What takes priority for us? And that means that I’m preaching to the choir again, because here you are in worship and it’s a priority for you. This community of Faith Church both shapes you and is shaped by you. Many of you have been here a long, long time and a few of you just got here, which is wonderful!

You are like a boat in a storm. You are weathering the storms out there together and you have been for a long time. People come and go over the years. Children who grew up here stay in touch and at Christmas they come back to touch base and feel the presence of this community. So it’s not surprising that Jesus would come back to his home synagogue and stand up to read. It would be kind of like if one of the previous pastors of Faith Church showed up one Sunday morning and we asked them to say a few words, or a prayer. Pretty informal.

But then what happens afterwards? The Spirit must have been there in the way that Jesus read those words. Something was different in the way Jesus spoke and so *“the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.”* That’s intense. Have you ever had that happen to you? They say public speaking is up there near the top of what people fear the most. But how about music recitals? I used to dread piano recitals when I was a child. My hands would get all sticky and my heart would race. Or sports’ competitions. Most of us probably don’t fall into that category. But

remember that when the Olympics start in 2 weeks. There may not be any live spectators, but the world will still be watching. That reminds me of what Phil Keoghan says at the beginning of each season of The Amazing Race. “The world is waiting for you.” Now there’s pressure for you! It’s harder than it looks! That’s what a lot of contestants say, and I believe them. When you’re under that kind of pressure, it’s easy to make mistakes or get lost or lose your passport. How do we respond when everyone’s eyes are on us? Can we plug into the Holy Spirit deep inside and stay focused and centered?

And so then Jesus says something that nobody else had ever said. “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus is saying that he is the one Isaiah is talking about. He has been anointed to do all those important things. He is the promised one the people have been waiting for. Okay, this is where the reading from 1 Corinthians 12 comes in. We all have a part to play. We’re all part of Christ’s body. We’re all good at different things, no matter how old you are or what you can do or not do at this point in your life. I like this Native American proverb which says it well. “Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I will understand.” When you get involved, you understand, sometimes too much! *For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body— Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.* Which part are you? Whatever it is, claim it as your own and do all things in the power of the Spirit. Amen.

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

HYMN# 319

“Spirit”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sharing Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Call to the Offering

*Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all people here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen

*Prayer of Dedication

Thank you, extravagant God, for your blessings in our lives. We offer ourselves in grateful response, seeking to live with such compassion toward others that your blessings will flow through us to bless our community and our world. Amen.

*HYMN #324

“Open My Eyes That I May See”

*BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE Glory to God (words by John Derrickson)

As we go forth, we'll live each day for him;

Almighty Lord, who washed away all sin;

All glory and honor, praise be unto his name;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen!

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

With the increase of infections from Covid-19 comes a gentle reminder to stay vigilant and continue to do all you can to keep yourself healthy. Masks are recommended while we are together for worship.

The Deacons will meet today after worship.

The next workday at the **Food Bank** will be January 26, 8:30-12:00 at 56 Armor Place, Dayton. It will be a drive-through pick-up. We are inside, but doors are open at both ends for cars to drive through. If you would like to volunteer, please let Mary Skare know at 937-689-2089. Thank you.

Here is the QR Code that will take you to Faith Church's website where you can give online for missions as well as your pledge and general offerings. Thanks for your support!



To remind us of our connection with the Presbytery of the Miami Valley, please pray for Blue Ball Presbyterian Church, located at 6901 Roosevelt Avenue, Franklin, Moderator Gidget Collins.

<i>Sunday's Leaders</i>	January 23	January 30
<i>Worship Leader</i>	Pat Harris	Sheryl Williams
<i>Usher</i>	Doris & Clay Harmsworth	Cyndi Adams

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

Julius Brodbeck Norma Lesher Roy Schroeder
Bob Christian Betsy Morris

*Pastor Julia Williamson
Music Director John Derrickson
Secretary Sarah Harner*

*5555 Chambersburg Rd. Huber Heights, Ohio 45424
Regular Office Hours Tues- Thurs 9 AM-12 PM
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