

# **First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth, Michigan**

**Sunday, June 6, 2021**

**“Creation to New Creation”**

**“Part 1: From Adam to Jesus to Us”**

**Rev. Mark Hovermale**

## **Rev. Mark Hovermale — Welcome, Announcements and Opening Prayer**

Welcome to worship today, on Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup>!

A special thank you for joining us and thank you, too, to Rev. Ashley, to Bekah Brudi, Darlene Maginley and Susan Underhill for today's online service.

We have a very special part of this online service—inclusion of baptisms that were previously videotaped in May with Rev. Emily Campbell. The baptisms of Natalie Marie Scott and Camden Jeffery Scott, granddaughter and grandson of Jeff and Carol Stoner, have been incorporated in today's online service.

We are so excited that we are returning to worship in the sanctuary on Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup>. We're going to also have an online service and parking lot service on that day. Starting July 25<sup>th</sup>, the parking lot service will be at 9:30 a.m., and the sanctuary service will be at 11:00 a.m. Now, this is a soft opening. We're getting back into the swing of things, and so we ask that you be patient with us as we start. But we are so excited for our soft opening of the church building on July 25<sup>th</sup> all the way through September 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 in the morning in the sanctuary.

Now starting September 12<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday after Labor Day, we are back in full swing: 9:30 a.m. sanctuary service and 11:05 a.m. upper room service, ideally with live streaming capability in both places, and the chancel choir! Yep, they will be back, and a time of hospitality. Grab that coffee between services. It's going to be a great opportunity! Jump back into worship in our church building with us in the fall of 2021.

The Fitness in Christ group has an amazing opportunity for you on Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, in Hines Park along Hines Drive. This is a fundraiser for the Second Mile Center, starting at 8:00 in the morning. If you're a runner, a biker, a walker, any type of athlete, we'd love to have you come out and you can find out more information on the FPCP website.

Also if you're coming to worship in person at some point, you will find out more details about that. Again, Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 in the morning, in Edward Hines Drive. You can join us as we raise money for the Second Mile Center for their parking lot.

Our final announcement today is about building enhancements for our own church building. There has been so much work being done at the church in regard to all the different construction projects. There's a few more things we want to do. We want to work on the ceiling in the sanctuary and carpeting in the sanctuary. We want to install lighting in addition to the existing lights. They'll be much better for worship. We want to install cameras and other equipment for live streaming of both worship services. We want to put in carpeting in the chapel, and new cushions for the pews in the sanctuary. Yes, new

cushions for the pews so you can pay attention more carefully! It's going to be a great operation that we're going to be working on here. But we need your help. We're thinking it's going to cost about \$78,000 to do all these much needed improvements. And so we ask that you just prayerfully consider partnering with us as we try to bring the building back up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and engaging in worship in new and exciting ways.

At this time we will have our opening prayer. Let us pray. Lord, we come before you and we thank you for today. We thank you for the opportunity to spend time in worship, even online, with you today. We pray for our church and the ministry that's happening here. We pray for our community and for our world, but right now we pray that we would engage in worship today and learn more about the new creation that can be in us. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

### **Bekah Brudi plays guitar and sings "*This is My Father's World*"**

Good morning, First Pres. We're going to begin our worship this morning by singing, "This is my Father's World." I love this song because it reminds me of the first five words of scripture in the Bible: "In the beginning God created..." And we are created in the image of our creator God.

### **Darlene Maginley, Director of Children's Ministry — Children's Message**

Good morning, kids. How are you today?

I know a lot of you play soccer and you have probably gotten a brand new soccer ball at some point. When you take it out of the package, that soccer ball is beautiful. It's completely clean. It doesn't have a mark on it. And then when you start to practice soccer what happens to the soccer ball? It gets dirty. It gets scuff marks on it. It might even get little rips or tears in it, sometimes.

That's how our life is! When God created the world he made everything perfect. He put Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The plants and animals and everything in the Garden of Eden was perfect for Adam and Eve, but then they made the mistake of eating from the one tree that God told them not to eat from. And sin came into the world.

That's kind of like that soccer ball. It starts out really perfect, just like Adam and Eve started out with everything perfect in the Garden of Eden.

We do things that are wrong. We sin. Maybe we're unkind or unhelpful to Mom and Dad. and that's when that soccer ball of *our* life starts to get a little bit dirty, and a little bit scraped up.

Do you remember a few weeks ago when we talked about Saul who became Paul? Saul was not very nice, but when he learned about Jesus and the truth about God and Jesus, suddenly Paul became a new person! He told everyone that he knew about the saving grace of Jesus. That's what God can do in our lives. And it would be like taking that dirty grungy soccer ball and right before your eyes it becomes perfectly clean again, just like a new one. God can turn us into a new creation. Paul talks about that in one of the chapters of the Bible that he wrote, how God transformed him into a new person.

I want you to remember that when you do things wrong and your life is feeling a little bit scuffed up and maybe a little bit dirty, that you can turn to God and you can tell him how sorry you are and say a prayer asking him to forgive you. And the good news is that God will always forgive all of our sins and he will take our dirty messy life and make it brand new again!

Let's say a prayer together. Dear father, we thank you so much for taking the messy soccer ball of our lives and for cleaning it up and forgiving us for all of those sinful things that we do. Just like a soccer ball can deflate and all of the air can go out of it if we don't use it and keep it in good shape, that's how our spiritual lives can be. So we ask that you keep us closely connected to you and help us to be near to you all of the time so that our spiritual lives can be full of air and ready to go at a moment's notice. It's in Jesus' name that we ask all of these things. Amen.

### **Rev. Emily Riley Campbell — Covenant of Baptism**

**(Baptism performed and videotaped in May 2021)**

**Natalie Marie Scott and Camden Jeffery Scott**

**Parents: Andrea and Brandon Scott**

**Maternal Grandparents: Jeff and Carol Stoner**

“We baptize those God has called in baptism. God claims us and seals us to show that we belong to God.”

“Today we celebrate the arrival of these new family members into Christ’s Church.”

### **Rev. Mark Hovermale — Presentation of new sermon series theme: “Creation to New Creation”**

Today, as we look at our theme, we're looking at a new sermon series called “Creation to New Creation”.

Today I'm looking at the idea of Adam to Christ to us. I have with me some challenging pieces of Lego. Lego pieces are very challenging for me. I'm still learning to figure out how they work.

Can you imagine. We used to purchase Lego sets with just 20 or 30 pieces in a set. Now in the new Star Wars Lego sets there are thousands of pieces! Can you imagine putting that together and then having it destroyed for some reason and having to find all the pieces to rebuild a thousand-piece Lego set? Trying to put them back together, with some of them damaged and messed up, would take a master craftsman or master Lego builder to put them back and rearrange them in just the way so they not only look the same but even better.

That's a crude example, but it's kind of like what Jesus does with us and what God does with us, You know that you were an “old creation” but within Christ you become a new creation. He creates you into something new. To actually take kind of a mess like me and building to something new, you need a master craftsman. That is who Jesus is and that's what we're going to learn more about in this sermon series. We’re going to learn how He does that.

## **Rev. Ashley S. Ashley — First Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-2, 26-27**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

## **Rev. Ashley — Second Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-19**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Friends, these are the words of our Lord. Thanks be to God.

## **Rev. Hovermale -- Sermon: “From Adam to Christ to Us”**

As we're looking at the creation and the new creation from Adam to Christ to us, we're going to look at understanding the statements in Corinthians in chapter 5.

I think we actually need to go way back, way back to the beginning of the creation of the world. The Bible explains our origins, not just as a story, but as an account of what actually happened. So much of our New Testament theology is actually based on the creation account in Genesis, chapter 1.

In the reading of today’s scripture passages, we have looked at it a little bit already.

“In the beginning” it says, “God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty; darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

Then it says in Genesis, chapter 1, verses 26 and 27,

“Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” It goes on and says,

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; It actually says that after God created us He says it was very good, not just good; it was very good.

Adam and Eve had this perfect connection to God until they sinned and broke God’s command. You may remember what happened. They were not to eat of the fruit from that specific tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now the serpent, which is the devil, asked a simple question. “Did God really say that?” He asked again, “Did God really say that?” And they fell for it. The devil wasn’t more creative than that! Now the devil will say to us all the time, “Did God really say \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank).

So because of the falling back then of Adam and Eve, reconciliation is needed to restore a right relationship with God. In the Old Testament they did this through the sacrificial system and in the New Testament something pretty big happens, and so the new creation.

We are this old creation. How do we become a new creation? How do we get reconciled to God? The New Testament book of 2 Corinthians, 5:17 says this.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

Now there is some debate about whether Paul was talking about whether the old would be erased or if it would just become new. But that's not for us to worry about today. For today, how has the new creation come to us? How do we go from *old* creation to a *new* creation, which basically means how do we become reconciled to God? How do we become reconciled to Almighty perfect God? We fail all the time!

Paul says implicitly, it is through Jesus Christ and Him alone. In 2 Corinthians 5, verses 18 and 19, as was read earlier,

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

And get this right here,

“that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them.”

Wow! When sin entered the world, back when Adam and Eve first messed up, there was a separation between God and mankind. Now the sacrificial system, with all the animals and the burnt offerings, was in the Old Testament. But something new was needed and it was experienced in the New Testament, and it was Jesus! Enter Jesus! Someone had to pay the price for our sin.

When you think about this, imagine a trial where there's a guilty person, and another guilty person goes, “Hey, I'll take their place.” Well, a guilty person can't take another guilty person’s place; it just doesn't make sense. But if an *innocent* person said to the judge, “Hey, I will take that guilty person’s place; I will take their judgment.” Now *that* holds some significant value, because here's an innocent person saying, “I will take the place of someone who is extremely messed up.”

Again, not the best example, maybe, but it is a key demonstration of what Jesus did for us. Jesus took our place on the cross, and that allows us to be reconciled with God because we have messed up. So Paul is telling this Corinthian church that if they are *in Christ* they are a new creation.

Our old selves become new creations in Christ! We can be reconciled, made right with God, can be a new creation through Christ. The old is gone, the new has come!

I'm going to share this sad story with you about myself. I got mad the other day and I "gently" tossed my cell phone in an aggressive manner! The screen split into a thousand pieces. I handled this "very well", as you can imagine! I looked at my destroyed phone and I knew I had reacted poorly. How to get this thing fixed? I couldn't use it; I'd cut my finger. It actually did cut me because I kept trying to use it. I went to the store creatively named, "You Break I Fix". I like that! Very simple to understand! I broke it; you fix it. Here's my money and they fixed it in an hour. I had my phone back and it was like my phone is perfectly new!

That is a silly example of what Jesus does with us. We're all cracked and messed up. We all screw up; we all mess up. Jesus, whose death on the cross reconciles us, makes a new creation. We're a new creation through Christ! There is one catch, though, and it's a doozy!

Reconciliation is becoming a new creation in Christ, the Bible says. So what does that mean? In Christ's church we believe that means that we can't be reconciled by other things, other stuff, other beliefs, other than Jesus. The Bible is pretty clear that Jesus Christ is the way to become reconciled with God. You have to have a personal relationship with Christ and acknowledge Him as your Savior to be a new creation. It's an unbelievable opportunity the Bible offers us.

It makes me think of the gospel. When you hear the word "gospel," you hear a lot of things, right? As soon as I said the word "gospel," you really went to thinking whether it was a political belief or whether it was a certain group of people or certain type of church.

**G**od says everyone has sinned, and **O**ur sins separate us from God. Our **S**ins over the years can't be erased, no matter how good of a life we live. **P**aying the price for our sin, the good news is that Christ died for us! **E**veryone who trusts in God has eternal life. **L**ife that is eternal can never be lost. G-O-S-P-E-L. The gospel!

I want to challenge you with this today. In about 15 minutes, I've talked about 'from Adam to Christ to us'. You are meant to be a new creation. Do you want to be like that new cell phone, that was all messed up, and it's all clean now. It can happen through Christ! Everyone who trusts in Him has eternal life!

Next week we are going to look at how the new creation lives in us and what we can do with that. The following week we are going forward. But, first things first. Are you a new creation in Christ? Christ died for us. The price has been paid on the tree. But you have to choose that new life *in Christ*. Thanks be to God.

### **Rev. Ashley — Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer**

Let us pray. Creator God, we give you thanks because from you all life springs forth. We celebrate the ways you hovered over the waters, how you formed life out of what was formless and void, how you filled the darkness with life and the breath of your Spirit. We give you thanks because not only were we created in your image, but through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, we are given an opportunity to be born again, as a new creation loving God.

We come before you now in confidence, knowing that in you the old is passing away and everything is becoming new. We know that you are the God of peace, of the present, and of purpose. You are both the God who sees our despair and the God who wipes away our

tears. Today we ask that you would hear the cries of our lips and of our hearts. Hear, we ask, when we pray, incline your ear to our words, our silences, our shouts, our cries, our whispers and our tears. Help us to see the works of your Spirit, the one who goes before and who prepares the way. In our joys and our laments, help us to find joy and celebration in you, in your resurrection, in your life, in your love, and in every way that you bring forth new life. May we see the hope of this new life in the words that you taught us to pray together 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 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.

**Bekah Brudi plays guitar and sings “*Beautiful Things*” by Gungor**

**Rev. Hovermale — Charge and Benediction**

May we find reconciliation ourselves as a new creation through our belief in Jesus Christ, as our Savior Lord.

And may the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be on you and yours today and forever more.  
Amen.