



United Methodist Church
of Westport and Weston

September 13, 2020
15th Sunday after Pentecost

Our Vision is to Know, to Live and to Share the Love of Jesus Christ.

Online Worship – 9:30am

THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION

None of us are permitted to insist on our own way... It's God we are answerable to—all the way from life to death and everything in between—not each other. That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that he could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other... Eventually, we're all going to end up kneeling side by side in the place of judgment, facing God. Your critical and condescending ways aren't going to improve your position there one bit.

Romans 14:7-12 (The Message)

PRELUDE

Faith of Our Fathers
Ahyoung Son, organ

H. Hemy, J. Walton

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Heather

CALL TO WORSHIP

Exodus 15:2 (CEB)

The Lord is my strength and my power;
The Lord has become my salvation.
This is my God, whom I will praise,
the God of my ancestors, whom I will acclaim.

HYMN

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

UMH 117

Verse 1

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home!

Verse 2

Under the shadow of thy throne, still may we dwell secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Verse 3

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
from everlasting, thou art God, to endless years the same.

Verse 4

A thousand ages, in thy sight, are like an evening gone;
short as the watch that ends the night, before the rising sun.

Verse 5

Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all who breathe away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.

Verse 6

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come;
be thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Lord, your grace and mercy are ever-present in our lives,
your forgiveness is boundless in mercy
when we fail to live in Christlike ways.
And yet, we are quick to carry a grudge—
quick to find fault,
quick to assign blame,
quick to harden our hearts toward others.
Set us apart, loving God,
to extend and model the grace you have shown us
by offering grace to others.
We pray in the name of the One who died
so that we might fully live. Amen.**

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Beloved siblings in Christ, receive the grace and saving love of God.
As Christ has forgiven us, may we forgive others.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 14:19-31 (NRSV)

Bob Dutton

19 The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. **20** It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. **22** The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. **23** The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. **24** At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. **25** He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

26 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." **27** So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea.

28 The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. **29** But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

31 Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Long ago, in many ways and places, God spoke to our ancestors.

God is still speaking.

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

"God is Our Guide"

Pastor Heather

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 18:21-35 (NRSV)

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

SERMON

“Fear & Forgiveness”

Rev. Heather A. M. Sinclair

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The ministry of the church is ongoing during these days. Your gifts, tithes and offerings continue to allow us to “be the church.” Checks may be sent to the church office or given online through our website. Your generosity is a blessing. Thank you.

God of our salvation, we remember that day when the Israelites, escaping their captors, were rescued by you, as you parted the sea to let them cross to freedom. We offer our gifts to you in thankfulness for all your blessings. We remember, that we have been blessed to be a blessing. May the lives we live this day and every day be an offering of blessing to those who are seeking to be rescued from hunger, homelessness, unemployment, illness and despair. Guide the feet of all your people to freedom. In Jesus, we pray. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Amazing Grace

arr. Andy Albritton

Hope Thacker, mezzo soprano; Susan Fairchild, piano; Heather Hisey, flute

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

UMH 95

Ahyoung Son, organ

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER *You are invited to pray in the version and language of your heart.*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for yours is the kingdom, and the glory, forever. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO LOVE AND SERVE

Verse 1

There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
it sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth.

Refrain

O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!

Verse 2

It tells me of a Savior's love, who died to set me free;
it tells me of his precious blood, the sinner's perfect plea. (***Refrain***)

Verse 3

It tells of one whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe;
who in each sorrow bears a part that none can bear below. (***Refrain***)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

I Know Whom I Have Believed

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR THIS MORNING are in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001 and in further tragedies related to the events of that day. May their memory inspire actions of mercy, peace and justice.

Portions of the Order of Worship are adapted from:

The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship, and The Faith We Sing,
Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House
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umcdiscipleshipresources.org; ministrymatters.com
Thom Shumann, lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2020/

Our Mission is:

To Know the love of Jesus in personal ways through worship, prayer and study
To Live the love of Jesus through acts of compassion, gentleness and justice
To Share the love of Jesus in our homes, our community and the world
To Welcome all of God's children regardless of age, race, ability, sexual or gender orientation, and economic circumstance.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WESTPORT AND WESTON
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OUR MINISTERS

EVERY PARTICIPANT IN THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION

JAY LUDY AND CINDY GLOVER, LAY LEADERS

REV. HEATHER A. M. SINCLAIR, PASTOR

CHRISTOPHER HISEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR • AHYOUNG SON, ORGANIST
 MARILYN SMITH, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT