



United Methodist Church
of Westport and Weston

November 8, 2020
23rd Sunday after Pentecost

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

Outdoor and Livestreamed Worship – 10:00am

THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION

Thessalonians 4:1-3, 9-10

The Apostle Paul wrote to the early Christians, “We ask you – we urge is more like it – that you keep on doing what we told you to do to please God, not in a dogged religious plod, but in a living, spirited dance...Regarding life together and getting along with each other, you don’t need me to tell you what to do. You’re God-taught in these matters. Just love one another! You’re already good at it...Keep it up; get better and better at it.”

PRELUDE

I Lift My Eyes Up (Psalm 121)
Ahyoung Son, keyboard

B. Doerksen
arr. A. Son

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WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Heather

CALL TO WORSHIP

Are you awake? Are you alert?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Are you watching the signs?

Are you interpreting what is happening today?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Do you see opportunities for serving God?

Do you see the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the needy?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

We gather together to worship our Timeless God,

Who has blessed us and guided us through the generations.

We gather together to listen for God’s word for us today.

We gather together with hope and trust in God’s vision for the future.

Christ has extended the invitation:

Let us work together in the reign of God on earth.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

To receive Christ in a new way, and prepare to work together in the reign of God, we must confess of the thoughts and actions that hold us back from serving as God calls us to service. Let us pray:

O Lord our God, we are aware of our many failings. We fail to be faithful to your word. We fail to share the good news of your merciful love and your gracious commitment to your creation, and to all humanity, whom you created. We confess our failure to learn from past lessons—both individually and collectively as a people before God. Merciful God, forgive our deliberate acts of turning away from you and your ways. Free us from our thoughtless acts of stubbornness in seeking to please our own selfish yet fleeting desires and ambitions. Stir us from our complacency.

(continues on next page)

Inspire us with a zeal for sharing the good news; encourage us in our stuttering attempts to tell others what God has done for us throughout our life; and empower us with a clear understanding of our own faith and trust in you, and your ways of justice and peace.

Open our ears, eyes and hearts to your presence with us, so that we may recognize you at work in the lives of people within and beyond your gathered community. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Beloved in Christ, even when we have gone astray, the love and grace of God will not let us go.

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

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

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.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 24:14-25

Nancy Everson

¹⁴“Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.” ²¹ And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the LORD!” ²² Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” ²³ He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel.” ²⁴ The people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” ²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Choose This Day”

Rev. Heather A. M. Sinclair

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

GIVING THANKS FOR OUR GIFTS

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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Ever vigilant God, you watch over us every night as we sleep and every day as we rise to do our work and as we gather at tables to feast on the food you provide. Your care for us is never ceasing. We long to be as vigilant as we strive to be the kingdom-ready church you desire here on earth. Help us to be aware of the needs around us. May we give generously so that we may be faithful and vigilant in our caring and compassion. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

I Can Only Imagine
Ahyoung Son, keyboard

B. Millard
arr. A. Son

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HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Ahyoung Son, keyboard

UMH 95

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER *You are invited to pray in the language and version 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.

HYMN

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

TFWS 2171

Verse 1

Make me a channel of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and where there’s doubt, true faith in you.

Verse 2

Make me a channel of your peace. Where there’s despair in life, let me bring you hope.
Where there is darkness, only light, and where there’s sadness, ever joy.

Verse 3

Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Verse 4

Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

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GOING FORTH TO LOVE AND SERVE

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Let It Rise

Ahyoung Son, keyboard

H. Davis
arr. A. Son

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Portions of the Order of Worship are adapted from:
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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.

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OUR MINISTERS

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