

Service of Worship for Sunday, September 19, 2021

Welcome

Greeting God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Prelude “Fanfare” *Wilson Oliphant*
“Alleluia” *Margrethe Hokanson*

Question of the Day Is it crazy to do ALL our “fundraising” in a span of four months?

Hymn #2165 *FWS* “Cry of My Heart”

Call to Worship

Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you.

God is always nearer than our next breath.

We want to become more aware of God’s presence.

Knowledge of God is a delight to the righteous.

Seek to grow in wisdom and understanding.

There is always more to discover than we know.

We put our trust in God who is our teacher and helper and judge.

We want to learn to be peaceable, gentle, and merciful.

We see to do good and not harm.

Prayer of Invocation

Holy God, you watch over us and show us the way to prosper in life. We submit ourselves to you for instruction. Help us to be honest with you about ourselves and with you, voicing our doubts as well as our faith, our hypocrisy along with all that is deeply genuine. By your Spirit create in us a space for quiet listening and thoughtful meditation. Amen.

Mark 9:30-37 *The Message*

Leaving there, [Jesus and his disciples] went through Galilee. He didn’t want anyone to know their whereabouts, for he wanted to teach his disciples. He told them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed to some people who want nothing to do with God. They will murder him. Three days after his murder, he will rise, alive.” They didn’t know what he was talking about, but were afraid to ask him about it.

They came to Capernaum. When he was safe at home, he asked them, “What were you discussing on the road?”

The silence was deafening – they had been arguing with one another over who among them was the greatest.

He sat down and summoned the Twelve. “So you want first place? Then take the last place. Be the servant of all.”

He put a child in the middle of the room. Then, cradling the little one in his arms, he said, “Whoever embraces one of these children as I do embraces me, and far more than me – God who sent me.”

James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a *New Revised Standard Version*

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also

be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. . . .

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Hymn #2161 *FWS* “To Know You More”

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

Let us turn to God with our confessions.

Unison Prayer

O God, who makes known to us all truth, we confess that we are weighed down by our failings: envy distances us from other people; greed alerts us only to our own desires. Where we might bring reconciliation, we create conflicts. Where you call us to give, we take. Where your presence beckons, we resist. We pray that you will not deal with us as we deserve, O God, but will show us your grace.

Time of Silent Prayer

Assurance and The Lord’s Prayer

Hear the good news! In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and we can live in peace. In gratitude we pray with Jesus:

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Is it crazy to do ALL our “fundraising” in a span of four months?

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

Song of Offering #94 *UMH* “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Offering Prayer

We thank you for the wealth you shower on us daily, O Lord, and we witness the marvelous goodness that comes from you. Transform these gifts into signs of welcome for all who are touched by their use. Transform us into people who bless others throughout each day, in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Sermon “Drawing Comparisons – or Drawing Near to God?” Rev. Joyce Rich

Commission and Blessing

Be gentle, honest, and merciful with those you meet;
ask for wisdom, and wisdom will fill you with joy.

**The God of all creation calls us to the power greater than death,
and our strength and dignity find renewal in Christ.**

The Spirit of kindness and abundant life, be with you now and always.
Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn #419 *UMH* "I Am Thine, O Lord"

Announcements

Readings For Next Week: Mark 9:38-50; James 5:13-20

Postlude "Tuba Tune in D" *C. S. Lang*

*Liturgical resources drawn from: **Led by Love: Worship Resources for Year B**, Lavon Bayler © 1996 United Church Press; and **Feasting on the Word: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2**, Kimberly Bracken Long, editor © 2015 Westminster John Knox Press.*