

MUMC At-Home Worship: June 13, 2021

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

Opening prayer (by Jim Burklo)

We are here to praise and enjoy God with body and soul, mind and heart, with song and word, with hands and feet. We are here to give because of the abundance God has given us, to share with each other, and to receive, because God has created us to depend on each other. We are here to celebrate the differences that otherwise might divide us: differences of age, of body, of culture, of opinion, of ability, of religious conviction. We are here to put things in perspective: to celebrate what matters, to laugh about things we take too seriously, to cry about things that truly touch our hearts. So may it be this morning: Amen!

Hymn *Hymn of Promise* United Methodist Hymnal #707

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

"Hymn of Promise" words and music by Natalie Sleeth, 1986. © 1986 Hope Publishing Co.

Scripture Lesson

1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13 (CEB)

Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his home in Gibeah. Samuel never saw Saul again before he died, but he grieved over Saul. However, the Lord regretted making Saul king over Israel. The Lord said to Samuel, "How long are you going to grieve over Saul? I have rejected him as king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and get going. I'm sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have found my next king among his sons." "How can I do that?" Samuel asked. "When Saul hears of it he'll kill me!" "Take a heifer with you," the Lord replied, "and say, 'I have come to make a sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will make clear to you what you should do. You will anoint for me the person I point out to you."

Samuel did what the Lord instructed. When he came to Bethlehem, the city elders came to meet him. They were shaking with fear. "Do you come in peace?" they asked. "Yes," Samuel

answered. "I've come to make a sacrifice to the Lord. Now make yourselves holy, then come with me to the sacrifice." Samuel made Jesse and his sons holy and invited them to the sacrifice as well. When they arrived, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, That must be the Lord's anointed right in front. But the Lord said to Samuel, "Have no regard for his appearance or stature, because I haven't selected him. God doesn't look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart."

Next Jesse called for Abinadab, who presented himself to Samuel, but he said, "The Lord hasn't chosen this one either." So Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, "No, the Lord hasn't chosen this one." Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord hasn't picked any of these." Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Is that all of your boys?" "There is still the youngest one," Jesse answered, "but he's out keeping the sheep." "Send for him," Samuel told Jesse, "because we can't proceed until he gets here."

So Jesse sent and brought him in. He was reddish brown, had beautiful eyes, and was good-looking. The Lord said, "That's the one. Go anoint him." So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him right there in front of his brothers. The Lord's spirit came over David from that point forward. Then Samuel left and went to Ramah.

Mark 4:26-34 (CEB)

Then Jesus said, "This is what God's kingdom is like. It's as though someone scatters seed on the ground, then sleeps and wakes night and day. The seed sprouts and grows, but the farmer doesn't know how. The earth produces crops all by itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full head of grain. Whenever the crop is ready, the farmer goes out to cut the grain because it's harvesttime."

He continued, "What's a good image for God's kingdom? What parable can I use to explain it? Consider a mustard seed. When scattered on the ground, it's the smallest of all the seeds on the earth; but when it's planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all vegetable plants. It produces such large branches that the birds in the sky are able to nest in its shade."

With many such parables he continued to give them the word, as much as they were able to hear. He spoke to them only in parables, then explained everything to his disciples when he was alone with them.

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Reflect:

1. Have you ever had to leave something behind in order to "start from scratch?" What challenges did that decision bring? What was unexpected as you chose and began to live into a new beginning?
2. Can personal fear and faith in God sit side by side within us? What has your life taught you about God's constancy in times of uncertainty?

3. If you had a roadmap of your life so far, what would that look like? Would there be twists and turns and obstacles on that map? What will the future look like on your personal roadmap?

Hymn *How Firm a Foundation* United Methodist Hymnal #529

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,
for I am thy God and will still give you aid;
I’ll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
for I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

“When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake.”

“How Firm a Foundation” words are “K” in Rippon’s A Selection of Hymns, 1787; music is an early USA melody; harm. from Tabor, 1866; and both are in the public domain.

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer
Lord’s Prayer

Hymn *You Are the Seed* United Methodist Hymnal #583

You are the seed that will grow a new sprout; you’re a star that will shine in the night;
you are the yeast and a small grain of salt, a beacon to glow in the dark.
You are the dawn that will bring a new day; you’re the wheat that will bear golden grain;
you are a sting and a soft, gentle touch, my witnesses where’er you go.

Chorus:

Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
“Lo, I’ll be with you forever, till the end of the world.”

You are the flame that will lighten the dark, sending sparkles of hope, faith, and love;
you are the shepherds to lead the whole world through valleys and pastures of peace.
You are the friend that I chose for myself, the word that I want to proclaim.
You are the new kingdom built on a rock where justice and truth always reign. **(Chorus)**

You are the life that will nurture the plant; you're the waves in a turbulent sea;
yesterday's yeast is beginning to rise, a new loaf of bread it will yield.
There is no place for a city to hide, nor a mountain can cover its might;
may your good deeds show a world in despair a path that will lead all to God. **(Chorus)**

"You Are the Seed" words by Cesareo Gabaraín, 1979; trans. by Raquel Gutiérrez-Achón and Skinner Chávez-Melo; music by Cesareo Gabaraín, 1979; harm. by Skinner Chávez-Melo, 1987 © 1979 Ediciones Paulinas; trans. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; harm. © 1987 Skinner Chávez-Melo

Closing Prayer: Holy God, bless us as we go from this place that we might be witnesses to your gospel and messengers of your love. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

(Blow out the candle)